

A NEW
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND,

FROM THE
DESCENT of the ROMANS,
TO THE
DEMISE of his late Majesty, GEORGE II.

INSCRIBED TO
His present Majesty, GEORGE III.

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Late of *Jesus College, Oxford.*

HISTORY is *philosophy teaching by examples.*
Bolingbroke from *Dion. Halic.*

VOL. XXVI.

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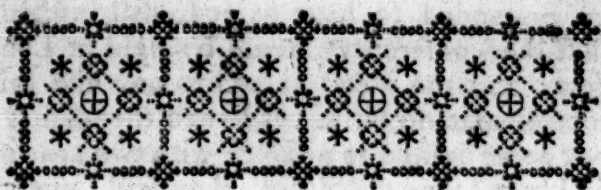
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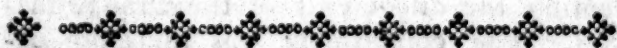
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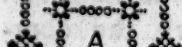


T H E

History of ENGLAND.



The HISTORY of CHARLES II.
continued. A. D. 1667.

 S the king was now heartily
tired of the Dutch war, he
 A took an opportunity to inti-
mate to the States his desire of
peace on reasonable terms ;
and their answer corresponded in the same
friendly sentiments. Charles, however, to

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support the appearance of superiority, which he pretended to have gained, still insisted, that the conferences should be held at London; and the States agreed to pay him this compliment, so far as concerned themselves; but being joined in alliance with two crowned heads, they could not, they said, undertake for the same condescension in these monarchs.

All of a sudden, Charles went so far on the other side, as to propose the sending the ambassadors to the Hague; but this offer, seemingly so honourable for the Dutch, was only intended to divide and embroil them, by giving the English an opportunity of inflaming the discontents of the Orange faction. The compliment was therefore declined with many expressions of gratitude; and conferences were immediately opened in the queen-mother's apartments at Paris, where the claims of both parties were examined.

The proposals of the Dutch were sufficiently reasonable; either that all things should be re-instated in the same condition, in which they were placed before the commencement of the war; or that both parties should retain possession of their present acquisitions. The latter offer was accepted by Charles; and almost every thing was settled,

settled, except some disputes relating to the
isle of Polerone.

This island is situated in the East Indies,
and was formerly remarkable for its product
of spices. The English had once possessed
it; but were expelled at the time when the
Dutch committed the massacre at Amboyna.

Cromwell, in his treaty with the States,
had stipulated to have it restored; and the
Dutch, having first cut down all the spice-
trees, alledged, that they had performed the
article, but that the English had been again
dispossessed of it in the course of the war.

Charles revived his claim to this island;
and as the difficulties on both sides began to
increase, and seemed to require a long ex-
amination, it was resolved to transfer the
treaty to some other place; and Breda was
chosen as the most convenient.

The English ambassadors, lord Holis and
Henry Coventry, proposed, that a cessation
of hostilities should be immediately conclud-
ed, till the several points in dispute could
be finally adjusted: but this proposal, in
appearance so natural, was rejected by the
interest of De Wit.

That sagacious and enterprizing minister,
intimately acquainted with the views of
princes and the state of affairs, had formed a
resolution of striking a blow, which might

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retrieve the honours lost by his countrymen in the course of the war, and severely retaliate those injuries, which he imputed to the wanton ambition and insatiable avarice of the English monarch.

Whatever hopes might have been entertained of Charles's diverting to his own use the money granted by parliament, it is more than probable that he had hitherto failed of his purpose. The expences of such mighty preparations had consumed all the supplies; and even great arrears were due to the sailors. The last supply therefore of eighteen hundred thousand pounds, the king was determined to save as far as he could; and to apply it to the discharge of his debts, as well those occasioned by the war, as those which his pleasures, which were ever uppermost in his thoughts, had induced him to contract.

He knew, that nothing but the utmost necessity had compelled the Dutch to engage in the war at first, and that the events of it were such as to make them desirous of its speedy termination. The French, he was sensible, had been drawn into hostilities from no other motive than that of assisting their allies; and were now more willing than ever to put an end to the quarrel.

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The differences between the parties were so trifling, that the treaty, which was now on foot, could hardly miscarry; and nothing he imagined, but some idle forms, or at least some vain points of honour, was wanting to bring it to a final conclusion.

In this situation, Charles, unmindful of the unprovoked injuries which he had offered to the Dutch, and eager to save the money he had received, rashly neglected his naval preparations, and exposed England to one of the greatest affronts, which it ever suffered. Two small squadrons were alone kept in pay; and during a war with such numerous and powerful enemies, every thing was left in as careless and negligent a posture, as if the nation had been blessed with a profound peace.

De Wit was acquainted with all these circumstances, and he resolved to convert them to his own advantage. He artfully prolonged the negotiations of Breda, and vigorously continued the naval preparations,

In a few weeks, the Dutch fleet entered the Thames under the command of De Ruyter, and filled the English with terror and consternation. A chain had been drawn across the river Medway; the fortifications of Sheerness and Upnor-Castle had been repaired: but all these precautions

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ons were of no avail. Sheerness was immediately taken, notwithstanding the gallant defence of Sir Edward Sprague the governor.

Favoured by a spring tide and an easterly wind, the Dutch furiously rushed forwards, and broke the chain, though secured by some ships, which had been there sunk by order of the duke of Albemarle. They burned the three ships, which were stationed to guard the chain, the Mathias, the Unity, and the Charles the Fifth.

After destroying several vessels, and seizing the hull of the Royal Charles, which the English had burned, they proceeded with six men of war, and five fire-ships, as far as Upnore-Castle, where they burned the Royal-Oak, the Loyal-London, and the Great-James. Captain Douglass, who commanded on board the Royal-Oak, was consumed in the flames, though he might easily have escaped. "Never was it known," said he, "that a Douglas left his post without orders."

The Dutch fell down the Medway without suffering any considerable loss; and it was feared, that next tide they might sail up the Thames, and carry their hostilities, even to the bridge of London. Thirteen ships were sunk at Woolwich, four

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at Blackwall: platforms were raised in many places, provided with cannon: the trained bands were marshalled and drawn out: and every place was filled with the utmost disorder and confusion.

The Dutch, finding the Thames inaccessible, set sail for Portsmouth, which they attempted in vain to reduce: they were equally unsuccessful at Plymouth: they insulted Harwich: they again entered the Thames, and advanced as far as Tilbury, where they were repulsed. The whole coast was in alarm; and had the French thought proper at this time to unite with the Dutch fleet, and make a descent upon England, consequences, the most fatal, had probably ensued.

The English were fired with indignation at seeing an enemy, whom they were wont to despise, whom they had foiled in so many rencounters, and whom they expected totally to subdue, now on a sudden become the sovereign lords of the ocean, destroy their ships in their very harbours, fill every place with confusion, and strike terror and consternation into the capital itself.

But though the cause of all these misfortunes was evident; though it could be attributed neither to unforeseen accidents, to the misconduct of admirals, nor the mis-
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behaviour of seamen, but solely to the avarice and negligence of the king; yet, to the praise of English loyalty, no dangerous symptoms of discontent were observed, and no attempt for an insurrection was made by any of those numerous sectaries, whom the zealous royalists had so often accused of seditious principles, and whom, on that account, they now subjected to the most rigorous and cruel treatment.

Though the Dutch made no more attacks on any of the English sea-ports, the coast was not entirely freed from alarms till the conclusion of the treaty of Breda, which was at last signed on the tenth day of July.

The king intimidated by the present danger sent orders to his ministers not to insist any longer on those demands, which, however frivolous in themselves, could not now be obtained, after the advantage gained by the enemy. Ploverone was yielded to the Dutch; Acadia ceded to the French; and the colony of New York was the only advantage, which the English derived from a war, where the national character of courage and conduct had been displayed in the most signal manner, but where the folly, avarice, and imprudence of the sovereign had been no less apparent.

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The king, conscious of his own unpopularity, determined, if possible, to retrieve the favour of the public by some important sacrifice ; and the victim whom he pitched on for this purpose, was no other than the lord chancellor ; a man, who, by a concurrence of untoward accidents, had incurred the hatred of almost every party in the kingdom.

All the numerous sectaries considered him as their implacable enemy ; and imputed to his advice and influence, those rigorous and severe laws, to which they had so long been subjected. The Catholics were sensible, that, while he preserved his authority, all their interests with the king and the duke would never be sufficient to procure them a full toleration.

Even the royalists, not being gratified in their sanguine hopes of favour and preferment, were inclined to throw the blame on Clarendon, into whose hands the king seemed at first to have committed the whole power of government.

The sale of Dunkirk, the bad payment of the sailors, the disgrace at Chatham, the shameful conclusion of the war ; all these calamities were imputed to the chancellor, who, though he had ever disapproved of the rupture with Holland, still thought it
his

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his duty to continue in office, and to serve his country in the best manner he could. A building too of greater splendour and magnificence, than seemed to be consistent with his narrow fortune, being imprudently undertaken by him, inflamed still farther the clamours of the public, as if he had acquired immense treasures by corruption. The people, by way of reproach, commonly gave it the name of Dunkirk-house.

The king himself, who had always more respected than loved the chancellor, had now conceived an inveterate antipathy against him. Amidst the licentious manners of the court, that minister still supported an inflexible dignity, and would never yield to any compliances, which he esteemed unworthy of his age and character.

Buckingham, a man of spirit and humour, but of a most vicious and abandoned life, still made him the object of his ridicule*, and insensibly diminished in the king, that regard, which he entertained for his minister.

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• Whenever Buckingham saw Clarendon coming, he was wont to say to the king; "here comes your school-master." He even presumed to ridicule the chancellor in his public character. He would sometimes walk in a stately manner with a pair of bellows before him for the purse, while colonel Titus followed with a fire-shovel on his shoulder for the mace.

When any difficulties occurred, either for want of power or money, the blame was still laid on the chancellor, who, it was supposed, had carefully, at the restoration, prevented all dangerous concessions to the king. And what perhaps affected Charles more sensibly, he found in Clarendon, it is alledged, an obstruction to his pleasure as well as to his ambition.

The king, weary of the enjoyment of his wife, who, it seems, was possessed of few personal charms, and desirous of having children, which he had no hopes of obtaining by his present spouse, had listened to proposals of procuring a divorce, either on pretence of her being pre-engaged to another, or of having made a vow of chastity before her marriage.

To this expedient he was farther prompted by his passion for Mrs. Stuart, daughter to a Scottish gentleman; a lady of great beauty and spirit, whose virtue he had long endeavoured in vain to corrupt: but Clarendon, alarmed at the consequences of a disputed title, and perhaps concerned for the succession of his grand-children, persuaded the duke of Richmond to marry Mrs. Stuart, and by that means defeated the king's project. This disappointment, it is alledged, was never forgiven by Charles.

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When politics, therefore, and inclination united to make the king sacrifice Clarendon to popular prejudices, the merit of his former services was no longer remembered. He was deprived of the seals, which were given to Sir Orlando Bridgeman. Southampton the treasurer was now dead; a nobleman, who, during the whole course of his life, had preserved an inviolable attachment to the chancellor, and who, a few days before his death, had expressed himself in the following terms: "this man," said he, speaking of Clarendon, "is a sincere Protestant, and a true Englishman: and while he is possessed of power, our laws, our liberties, and our religion are perfectly secure. I tremble at the thoughts of his removal."

But the fall of the chancellor was not sufficient to appease the rage of his implacable enemies: they were determined to effect his total destruction. In vain did the duke of York exert his interest in defence of his father-in-law. Both prince and people were bent upon his ruin; and no expedient was deemed so proper for gaining the favour of a parliament, which had so long been directed by that very minister, who was now to be the victim of their prejudices.

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The session was ushered in by some acts of a popular nature ; and the parliament, in their first address, gave the king thanks for those marks of his goodness, and particularly for his dismissal of the earl of Clarendon. The king, in his answer, assured the houses, that he would never again employ that nobleman in any public office whatever.

In a few days, a charge of high treason was preferred against him in the house of commons by Mr. Seymour, afterwards Sir Edward, and consisted of seventeen articles. These were, that he had advised the king to govern by military power without parliaments ; that he had said the king was a Papist, or Popishly affected ; that he had accepted large bribes for procuring the Canary-patent, and other grants of the like nature ; that he had illegally imprisoned several of his majesty's subjects in remote islands and garrisons, and, by that means, deprived them of the benefit of the law ; that he had farmed the customs at a rate greatly below their real value ; that he had received great sums of money from the vintner's company for allowing them to raise the price of wines ; that he had in a short time amassed a greater estate than could have been procured by the lawful profits of his

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his office ; that he had established an arbitrary government in his majesty's plantations ; that he had rejected a proposal for the preservation of Nevis and St. Christopher's, which was the occasion of great losses in those quarters ; that when he attended his majesty beyond sea, he maintained a correspondence with Cromwell and his accomplices ; that he advised the sale of Dunkirk ; that he had unduly altered letters patent under the king's great seal ; that he had unduly decided causes in council, which ought to have been brought before the court of chancery ; that he had issued *Quo Warrantos* against corporations with a design of extorting money from them ; that he had taken bribes for passing the bills of settlement of Ireland ; that he had betrayed the nation in all foreign treaties ; and that he had advised the fatal separation of the fleet in the late war, which had well nigh been attended with the loss of a considerable part of his majesty's navy.

Many of these articles are evidently false or frivolous or both ; and such of them as appear to be better founded, may yet admit of a plausible apology ; nor can they with any propriety, be imputed to the earl of Clarendon alone. His advising the sale of Dunkirk seems to be the heaviest and truest
part

part of the charge: but even this, the most exceptionable of all his councils, was rather owing to a mistake in judgment than to any malignity of intention.

When this charge was presented to the peers, as it contained only an accusation of treason in general, without descending to any particulars, it was not deemed a sufficient reason for taking the chancellor into custody. The cases of Strafford and Laud, on account of the violence of the times, were not supposed to be a proper authority: but the commons still insisting upon his commitment, it was requisite to appoint a free conference between the houses. The lords adhered to their resolution; and the commons voted this refusal to be an obstruction to public justice, and a precedent of evil and dangerous consequence. They likewise named a committee to frame a vindication of their own proceedings.

Clarendon, conscious of his own unpopularity, and of the inveterate hatred which the king had conceived against him, thought it most adviseable to withdraw from the kingdom. At Calais, he wrote a paper, addressed to the lords, in which he protested, that he had never received the value of a farthing from any person whatsoever, above the lawful perquisites of his office,

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exclusive of the king's bounty; that, during some years after the restoration, he had always agreed in opinion with the other counsellors, men of such established character, that no one could suspect them either of want of ability or integrity; that his credit soon declined, and however he might condemn some measures adopted, he found it in vain to oppose them; that his aversion to the Dutch war, the source of all the public calamities, was always universally known, as well as his disapprobation of many unhappy steps taken in conducting it; that he had never given any private advice to his majesty, with regard to the negociation for peace; that he had never written letters or instructions, but by the express order of the king and council; and that whatever pretext might be made of national offences, his real crime, and that which had provoked his powerful enemies, was his constant opposition to unreasonable grants, which the importunity of suitors had extorted from his majesty.

This paper the lords delivered to the commons under the denomination of a libel; and by a vote of both houses, it was condemned to be burned by the hands of the common hangman. They next proceeded to exert their legislative authority against
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Clarendon, and passed a bill of banishment and incapacity, which received the royal sanction. He withdrew into France, where he spent the remainder of his life in reviewing and digesting the materials he had collected for composing the history of the civil wars; a performance, which does great honour to his memory, and shows him to have been a warm friend to the constitution of his country.

The next step, which the king took, in order to render himself popular, is much more worthy of praise; and had it been steadily pursued, would probably have been attended with the most important and the most beneficial consequences. This was the triple league or alliance; a measure, which gave entire satisfaction to his subjects. At the treaty of the Pyrenées, when Lewis the fourteenth of France espoused the Spanish princess, he had solemnly renounced every title of succession to every part of the Spanish monarchy: but no sooner was his father-in-law dead, than he retracted his renunciation, and alledged, that natural rights, depending on blood and succession, could not be annulled by any extorted deed or engagement.

Philip was succeeded by his son, Charles the second of Spain; but as the queen of
France

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France was born of a former marriage, she laid claim to a considerable province of the Spanish monarchy, even to the exclusion of her brother. By the customs of some parts of Brabant, a female of a first marriage had a prior right to a male of a second, in the succession to private inheritances; and Lewis thence concluded, that his queen was entitled to the dominion of that important duchy. In order to support a claim, which was so ill founded, Lewis appeared on the frontiers of the Netherlands with an army of forty thousand men, conducted by the best generals of the age, and supplied with every thing necessary for action.

The Spaniards, naturally honourable and sincere themselves, were little inclined to suspect the honour or sincerity of their neighbours. Relying implicitly on the faith of the late treaty, they had entirely neglected every means of defence; and many of their towns, being totally destitute of garrisons or ammunition, fell into the hands of the French king, as soon as he summoned them to surrender. Athe, Lisle, Tournay, Oudenarde, Courtray, Charleroi, Binche were immediately reduced; and it was evident, that no force in the Low-Countries was able to check the progress of this unjust but victorious invader.

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This sudden and unexpected irruption gave a general alarm to all the neighbouring states of Europe; but to none more than to the Dutch, whose territories lay nearest the danger. They were still, together with France, engaged in a war against England; and Lewis had assured them, that he would take no steps against Spain, without their knowledge and concurrence: but notwithstanding this assurance, he observed a profound silence, until he was ready to carry his scheme into execution.

If the renunciation, made at the treaty of the Pyrenées, was of no effect, it was plainly foreseen, that upon the death of the king of Spain, an infirm infant, the whole Spanish monarchy would be claimed by Lewis; after which it would be in vain to endeavour to set bounds to his ambition. Charles, sensible of the delicate situation in which the Dutch were placed, had been more obstinate in insisting upon terms at Breda; and by delaying to sign the treaty, had imprudently exposed himself to the signal disgrace, which he had suffered at Chatham.

No sooner, however, was the peace concluded, than he ordered, Sir William Temple, his minister at Brussels, to repair secretly to the Hague, and to concert with the States

States the means of preserving the Netherlands. Temple was naturally frank, open, and sincere; and meeting in De Wit with a man of the like generous sentiments, he instantly acquainted him with his master's intention, and recommended a speedy and immediate conclusion.

A treaty was accordingly conducted between these two statesmen with as little reserve, as if it were a private affair transacted between two intimate friends. Fully convinced that the interests of their country were the same, they readily entered into each other's views; and though jealousy against the house of Orange might render De Wit averse to a strict union with England, he nobly determined to prefer the good of the public to all partial and private considerations.

Temple proposed an offensive league between England and Holland, in order to compel France to abandon all her conquests: but De Wit alledged, that this measure was too rash and hazardous to be embraced by the States. Lewis had offered to relinquish all his queen's rights, provided he might either be allowed to retain the acquisitions, which he made during the last campaign, or that he should be put in possession of

of Franche-comté, together with Cambray, Aire, and St. Omers.

This proposal Temple and De Wit made the foundation of their treaty. They resolved to mediate a peace between the contending powers, and oblige France to adhere to this alternative and Spain to accept of it. If Spain should prove refractory, they determined, that France should not assert her claim by arms, but leave it entirely to England to force her into a compliance. The remaining part of the Low Countries they thenceforth guaranteed to Spain. A defensive alliance was at the same time concluded between England and Holland.

The articles of this league were soon settled by two such candid and able negotiators: but the greatest difficulty still remained. By the laws of the republic, all the towns in all the provinces must give their consent to every treaty; and besides that this formality could not be finished in less than two months, it was to be feared, that the intrigues of the French party might prevail on some of the smaller cities to refuse their concurrence. D'Estrades, the French ambassador, a man of great sagacity, being informed of the league, which was in agitation, seemed to consider it as a matter of

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no importance: "six weeks hence," said he, "we shall speak to it."

To remove this obstruction, De Wit had the spirit, for the sake of public utility, to depart from the laws in so material an article; and by his authority he persuaded the States General at once to sign and confirm the league; though they were sensible, that, if that measure should be disapproved by their constituents, they incurred the danger of a capital punishment. After sealing, all parties congratulated each other on the success of the negociation. Temple exclaimed, "At Breda, as friends: here, as 'brothers.'" And De Wit, observed, that now the affair was finished, it looked like a miracle.*

Room had been left in the treaty for the accession of Sweden, which was soon after procured; and thus was concluded in five days the triple alliance; an event, which gave great satisfaction to every State in Europe, that of France alone excepted. Lewis indeed, was highly offended at this measure. Not only was a stop put to the present progress of his arms: such a barrier was formed against them for the future as seemed to be altogether invincible. The treaty indeed
was

was perfectly agreeable to the offer he had made: but he had allowed so short a time for the acceptance of that offer, that he still hoped from the delays and reluctance of Spain, to find a pretext for evading it.

The court of Spain was equally dissatisfied with this alliance. To be compelled to resign any part of the Spanish provinces, in lieu of pretensions, so glaringly unjust, and these supported in such a haughty and insolent manner, was the object of peculiar indignation. Often did they threaten to relinquish intirely the Low Countries rather than agree to such unreasonable terms; and they intended, by this menace, to frighten the contracting powers into more vigorous measures for their defence.

But Temple and De Wit were not to be deceived by this bravado. They knew, that Spain must still keep possession of the Low Countries, as a bond of union with the other European powers, who alone, if her young monarch should happen to die without issue, could secure her independency against the ambition of France. They still insisted, therefore, on the terms of the triple alliance, and threatened Spain with war in case of refusal. Aix-la-Chapelle was the place pitched upon for the meeting of the plenipotentiaries, who immediately were

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sent thither by all the powers concerned. Temple was minister for England; Van Beuninghen for Holland; D'Hona for Sweden.

Spain at last, finding it in vain to resist, made choice of the alternative proposed; but in her very compliance, she shewed strong symptoms of dissatisfaction and displeasure. It was evident, that the Dutch, solely concerned for their own safety, had been entirely regardless of the honour of Spain; and provided they could secure their own frontiers against Lewis, they were perfectly indifferent what conquests he made in other places.

Conscious of these motives, the queen-regent of Spain determined still to keep them in a situation, which might sometime compell them to engage in a more intimate alliance than what they were at present inclined to contract. Franche-comté had been subdued by Lewis, in the space of fifteen days, during a rigorous and severe winter. She chose, therefore, to recover this province, and to relinquish all the towns which had been lost in Flanders during the preceeding campaign. By this means Lewis extended his conquests into the heart of the Low Countries; and a very feeble barrier was left to the Dutch frontiers.

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But notwithstanding all these advantages, the French king could have little prospect of ever being able to enlarge his dominions in that quarter, which was most exposed to his arms, and where his conquests would be of the greatest importance. By the triple league the remaining provinces were guaranteed to Spain; and the emperor and other powers of Germany, whose interests seemed to be most immediately concerned, were desired to engage in the same confederacy. Spain herself, having about this period, under the mediation of Charles, concluded a peace on equal terms with Portugal, might be supposed to make a more vigorous opposition against her proud and ambitious rival.

The English in general were so highly pleased with the triple alliance, that all men expressed an entire satisfaction in the measures of the court; and the spirit of jealousy and discontent seemed, for the present, to be totally extinguished. The affairs of Scotland were far from being in the same quiet and peaceable situation. Charles, from his natural indolence, had committed the government of that country to his ministers, particularly Middleton; and these could not forbear encroaching on the privileges and liberties of the people.

Lorne, it seems, had wrote a letter to lord Duffus, in which, a little too plainly, but very truly, he complained, that his enemies had endeavoured to prejudice his sovereign against him. But, he said, that he had now discovered and defeated their wicked and malicious intentions. This letter was intercepted and produced before the parliament; and Lorne was tried upon an obsolete and absurd law of *Leasing-making*; by which it was declared criminal to misrepresent the subjects to the king, or inspire him with an ill opinion of them. He was condemned to lose his head: but Charles, conscious of the iniquity of the sentence, was pleased to indulge him with a pardon.

It was decreed in parliament, that twelve persons, without crime, witness, trial, or accuser, should be utterly disqualified for all trust or office; and to add to the injustice of the proceeding, it was resolved, that these persons should be destined by ballot: a method of voting, which several republics had employed at elections, in order to prevent cabals and intrigues; but which, in the present case, could answer no other purpose, than to conceal the malice and cruelty of the ministers. Lauderdale, Crawford, and Sir Robert Murray, among others, were de-

declared incapable of any public employment: but the king, dissatisfied with this illegal measure, refused to give it his sanction.

An act was passed against all persons, who should apply to the king for restoring the children of those attainted by parliament. No penalty, it is true, was annexed: but the act was only, on that account, the more arbitrary, and, by consequence, the more tyrannical. Middleton, as commissioner, gave his assent to this act; though he had no instructions for that purpose. A general indemnity had lately been granted: but notwithstanding this security, it was now decreed, that all those, who had been concerned in the late commotions, should be condemned in fines; and many were by this means reduced to absolute beggary.

The chief circumstance, however, which inflamed the minds of the Scots, and gave occasion to all the subsequent disorders in that kingdom, was the rigorous execution of the laws for the introduction of episcopacy. The right of patrons had for some time been annulled; and the power of choosing ministers had been enjoyed by the church session and lay-elders. It was now decreed, that all the incumbents, who had been elected in this manner, should accept

of a presentation from the patron, and should be instituted anew by the bishop, under pain of deprivation.

The more rigid Presbyterians, supposing, that they should be able to protect themselves by their number, entered into a mutual engagement, and refused compliance. Three hundred and fifty parishes, comprehending above one third of the kingdom, were at once declared vacant. The western counties were particularly obstinate on this occasion. New ministers were appointed in all the vacant churches; and no one was so ignorant or vicious as to be deemed improper.

The people, who entertained a great esteem for their former teachers; men distinguished for the severity of their manners and their zeal in preaching; were enraged against these intruders, who had received their livings under such invidious circumstances, and who took no pains, by the regularity of their conduct, to mitigate the odium under which they laboured. Even most of those, who preserved their livings by submission, incurred the suspicion of hypocrisy, either by betraying an aversion to the new form of ecclesiastical government, which they had embraced, or on the other hand, by declaring, that their former attachment to Presbytery

tery and the covenant had been merely the effect of violence and compulsion.

The people, notwithstanding these causes of discontent, were determined to give no pretext for any rigorous proceedings against them, by discovering the least inclination to mutiny or sedition: but this quiet and peaceful behaviour, instead of procuring them more gentle treatment, was only employed as an argument for pursuing the same violent measures, which had hitherto been found to be attended with so much success. The king, however, was dissatisfied with Middleton's tyranny; and he appointed Rothes, commissioner in his place. This nobleman was already president of the council; and he was soon after advanced to the office of lord keeper and treasurer. Lauderdale still remained secretary of state, and for the most part resided at London.

Such was the state of affairs in Scotland, when the severe law was made in England against conventicles. The Scottish parliament followed this violent example, by enacting a like law. The king named a kind of high commission court for carrying this rigorous act into execution, and for the management of all ecclesiastical affairs. But even this court, tyrannical as it might be considered, was much more tolerable than the

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the method which was next embraced. Whoever refused to comply with the new model of church government, was subjected to military force. In all the counties, where the people had forsaken their churches, the guards were allowed to live at free quarters.

These licensed freebooters were commanded by Sir James Turner, a man of a cruel and brutal disposition, and who was often intoxicated by the use of strong liquors. He patrolled through the country, and received from the ministers lists of those, who abandoned their churches, or were suspected to frequent conventicles. Without farther proof or conviction, he subjected them to a severe fine, and quartered soldiers on the supposed delinquents, until they paid the illegal exaction.

To prevent a rebellion during the Dutch war, new forces were raised, and entrusted to the command of Dalziel and Drummond; two officers, who had served the late king during the civil commotions, and had afterwards engaged in the Russian service, where they had increased the native barbarity of their temper. These military tyrants, were let loose to prey on the innocent inhabitants. The king was displeased with such violent proceedings; and besides giving orders, that

that the ecclesiastical commission should be abolished, he recommended to his ministers a more mild and moderate conduct. This injunction of the king's arrived too late to prevent the consequences of the former measures. The people, animated by religious zeal, and enraged by the cruel treatment they had suffered, flew to arms. They seized Turner in Dumfries, and determined to have sacrificed him to their just resentment; but perceiving, that his orders, which they found in his pocket, were more tyrannical than his conduct, they thought proper to spare his life.

At Lanerick, they renewed the covenant, and published a manifesto; in which they professed an inviolable attachment to his majesty's person and government: they only required the restoration of Presbytery and of their former ministers. They were headed by Wallace and Learmont, two officers, who had served in the army. Their numbers hardly amounted to two thousand men; and though the whole country wished well to their cause, the people in general were so over-awed by the rigour of the government, that the insurgents could hope for no farther accession of strength.

Dalziel took the field in order to suppress them. Their number was now decreased to
eight

eight hundred men. These had approached to the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, in hopes of being joined by the inhabitants of that city : but finding themselves disappointed in their expectations, they endeavoured to retreat into the Western counties by the way Pentland-hills. In their passage through these mountains, they were suddenly surrounded by the king's forces. Every means of escape being now cut off, they were obliged to stop their march. Their ministers endeavoured to inspire them with courage.

After singing some psalms, they turned on the enemy ; and being possessed of the advantage of the ground, they sustained the first charge with great resolution. But that was the whole of the action. In a moment they lost their ranks, and betook themselves to a precipitate flight. About forty of them were slain on the spot, and a hundred and thirty taken prisoners. The rest, favoured by the darkness, and by the fatigue, and even by the compassion of the king's troops, found means to make their escape.

The cruel treatment to which these people had been subjected, the violent prejudices with which they were possessed, and their harmless and inoffensive behaviour during the insurrection, strongly interested all men in their favour ; yet were the king's mini-

ministers, particularly Sharpe, determined to punish them with the utmost severity. Ten were hanged on one gallows at Edinburgh: thirty-five were executed before their own doors in different places. These unhappy creatures might, all of them, have saved their lives, if they would have abjured the covenant.

The ministers were proceeding in their barbarous career, when the king put a stop to their cruelty. He said, that blood enough had already been shed; and he wrote a letter in which he commanded, that such of the prisoners, as would simply engage to obey the laws for the future, should be dismissed, and that the most obstinate should be transported.

This letter was sent by Burnet, archbishop of Glasgow; but Sharpe, the president of the council, having thought proper to conceal it for some time, one Maccaill, a preacher, was, in the interim, put to the torture, under which he expired. He seemed to die in a rapture of religious joy; exclaiming in a clear and distinct voice,
 “farewell sun, moon and stars! farewell
 “world and time! farewell weak and frail
 “body! welcome eternity! welcome angels
 “and saints! welcome saviour of the world!
 “and welcome God, the judge of all!”

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The English parliament re-assembled after a long adjournment; and the king expected to find a very compliant humour in the commons. All his late measures had been calculated to secure the affections of his subjects; and above all the triple alliance, it was imagined, would be sufficient to atone for the unhappy conclusion of the Dutch war. But a new attempt, made by the court, defeated, for a time, the effect of all these endeavours. Buckingham, who was much trusted by the king, and possessed great influence in the house of commons, had also entered into some connexions with the Non-conformists; and he now projected a plan, in concert with the lord keeper, Sir Orlando Bridgeman, and Sir Mathew Hale, chief justice, to put an end to those severities, to which these Dissenters had been so long subjected.

It was resolved to admit the Presbyterians into the body of the church by a more comprehensive liturgy, and to indulge the Independents and other sectaries with a free toleration. Favour appears not, by this scheme, as by others adopted during the present reign, to have been designed the Roman Catholics: yet were the commons filled with apprehensions of this nature, and even carried their jealousy so far, that,
instead

Instead of giving his majesty thanks for the triple league, a measure so popular and praise-worthy, they presented an address for a proclamation against conventicles.

Their request was granted; but as the king still discovered an inclination to reconcile his Protestant subjects, the commons passed a very unusual vote, that no man should introduce into the house any bill for that purpose. The king in vain renewed his importunities for supply, represented the necessity of repairing the navy, and even promised, that the money which they should allot for that end, should be collected and issued by commissioners appointed by the house.

Instead of complying with his majesty's request, the commons voted an enquiry into all the miscarriages during the late war; the neglect of improving the duke's victory in consequence of the false orders delivered by by Brounker; the misfortune at Berghen; the separation of the fleet under prince Rupert, and the duke of Albemarle; and the disgrace at Chatham.

The result of this enquiry was, that Brounker was expelled the house, and ordered to be impeached. Commissioner Pet, whose business it was to provide for the security of Chatham, met with the same fate. These

impeachments were never prosecuted. The house, having thus expressed their dissatisfaction with the measures of the court, were at last induced to vote his majesty three hundred and ten thousand pounds, by an imposition on wine and other liquors ; after which they were adjourned.

Before the end of the session, there happened a quarrel between the two houses, which was like to have been attended with very dangerous consequences. One Skinner, a merchant in London, had complained to the house of peers, of an injury he had received from the East-India company. The lords, having examined the case, ordained, that the company should pay five thousand pounds to the plaintiff by way of damages. The commons voted, that the lords, in determining a cause originally, without any appeal from inferior courts, had acted in a manner inconsistent with the laws of the land ; and that Skinner, in commencing the suit before the upper house, had encroached on the privileges of the commons ; for which offence they ordered him to be committed to prison.

The lords insisted on their right of judicature, and affirmed, that their method of procedure was perfectly regular. Several conferences were held between the houses,
but

but without coming to any agreement. At last the commons voted, that " whoever should
" be aiding or assisting in putting in exe-
" cution the order or sentence of the house
" of lords, in the case of Skinner against
" the East-India company, shall be deem-
" ed a betrayer of the rights and liberties
" of the commons of England, and an in-
" fringer of the privileges of the house of
" commons." They well knew, that, after
this vote, no one would dare to provoke
their indignation. The proceedings of the
lords indeed seem in the present case to
have been directly contrary to all former
precedent.

The parliament re-assembled in the month
of October, * and discovered some inclina-
tion to relieve the necessities of the king: but
before they would grant him this indul-
gence, they demanded his assent to the
law against conventicles; and Charles, see-
ing no other way of gratifying their hu-
mour, was obliged to comply with their re-
quest. The dispute tween the two houses
was renewed; and as the commons had
voted only four hundred thousand pounds,
which the king judged too little for his
necessities, he thought proper, before they

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had

had passed their vote into a law, to pro-
 rogue them.

His wants, however, were now become
 so pressing, that he was obliged again to
 convene them in the spring.* They instant-
 ly resumed the business of supply; and
 granted the king an additional duty, during
 eight years, of twelve pounds on each tun
 of Spanish wine, and eight on each tun of
 French.

An act was likewise passed, enabling him
 to dispose of the fee-farm-rents; the only
 part which now remained of those extensive
 demesnes by which the ancient kings of Eng-
 land supported the dignity of their crown.
 By this expedient he procured some supply
 for his present necessities; but he left himself
 and all his successors, in a still more depend-
 ant situation than before. How much mo-
 ney might be produced by these sales is alto-
 gether uncertain. The writers on both sides
 of the question differ extremely in their ac-
 counts; some affirming that it amounted to
 one million eight hundred thousand pounds;
 while others assert, that it did not exceed
 the eighteenth part of that sum.

The act against conventicles passed; and
 imported, that the hearer in a conventicle,
 (that

(that is a dissenting assembly, where more than five were present beside the family) should be fined five shillings for the first offence, ten for the second; the preacher twenty pounds for the first offence, forty for the second. The person, in whose house the conventicle met, was subjected to a like fine with the preacher.

It was likewise decreed, that, if any dispute should happen with regard to the meaning of any part of the act, the judges should always explain the doubt in the sense most unfavourable to the conventicles, it being the design of the parliament entirely to suppress them. This clause was directly contrary to the most acknowledged maxims of civil policy, which require, that in all criminal trials, indulgence should always be shown to the prisoner.

The affair of Skinner was still undecided; but the king, apprehensive of a fresh rupture between the two houses, persuaded the peers to agree to the proposal made by the commons, that a general rasure should be made of all the proceedings with regard to that controversy.

We are now come to a period, when the king's councils, which had hitherto, in many respects, been laudable, in most, excusable, became, during some time, ex-

• tremely wicked and pernicious; and were attended with such consequences, as had well nigh proved fatal both to prince and people. Happily for the nation the same indolence still accompanied him; and, as it had weakened the force of the good, it also diminished the effect of the bad measures, which he adopted.

It was commonly observed, that a total alteration was made in the committee of council, appointed for foreign affairs; and that prince Rupert, the duke of Ormond, secretary Trevor, and lord keeper Bridgeman, men of incorruptible integrity, were never admitted to any deliberations. The whole secret was conducted by five persons, Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, Lauderdale; a junto distinguished by the appellation of "The Cabal," a word formed by the initial letters of their names. Never was there a more pernicious ministry in England, nor one more remarkable for wicked councils.

Lord Ashley, soon after advanced to the earldom of Shaftsbury, was one of the greatest geniuses of the age, and the chief author of all the succeeding measures. In his early youth, he had espoused the late king's party; but having received some affront from prince Maurice, he soon revolted to the
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parliament. He had the address to gain the confidence of Cromwell ; and as he possessed great interest among the Presbyterians, he contributed to support the authority of that usurper. He employed the same influence in forwarding the restoration ; and, on that account both merited and obtained great favour with the king.

In all his changes, he still preserved the character of never betraying those friends whom he abandoned ; and which ever party he espoused, his great abilities always procured him a ready admittance, and soon enabled him to acquire a distinguished influence. Bold, daring, and ambitious ; no station could satisfy his desires, no dangers could appal his courage. Intimately acquainted with the blind zeal of parties, he had entirely conquered all sense of shame ; and confiding in the dexterity of his contrivances, he was not startled at enterprizes, the most difficult and the most criminal.

The duke of Buckingham was a man of great wit and vivacity ; but his wild and irregular conduct, unrestrained by any principle, and undirected by any maxim, rendered him totally unfit for the management of the arduous affairs of state. Fickle and inconstant in his temper, the least interest could seduce him from his honour ; the
small

smallest pleasure could divert him from his interest; and the most ridiculous caprice was sufficient to counterballance his pleasure.

By his want of secrecy and prudence he ruined his character in public life; by his neglect of order and œconomy he squandered away his private fortune: by riot and debauchery, he destroyed his constitution: and he remained, at last, an object of derision to those very persons, who had once admired his superficial endowments.

The earl, soon after created duke, of Lauderdale, was possessed of good natural parts, improved by study and conversation; but he was awkward in his address, ungraceful in his person, and unpolished in his manners. His principles were strong, but unable to restrain his ambition: his ambition was still less violent than the fury and impetuosity of his temper. A cold friend, but an implacable enemy; abject to his superiors, but overbearing to his inferiors; though in his whole character and conduct he was almost diametrically opposite to the king, he had the fortune, beyond any of his ministers, to acquire and preserve, during the greatest part of his reign, a considerable influence over him.

Sir Thomas Clifford was distinguished by his talents of parliamentary eloquence and intrigue; and his bold and enterprising spirit gave him great weight in the king's councils. Arlington possessed but a moderate capacity, and was not remarkable for any vicious habit, though he wanted courage to resist the temptations of his colleagues. In conjunction with Temple and Bridgeman, he had strenuously promoted the triple league; but he engaged with equal zeal and alacrity in contrary measures, when he found them acceptable to his master.

Clifford and he were secretly Catholics: Shaftsbury, though an admirer of astrology, was esteemed a deist: Buckingham was too fickle and volatile to embrace any fixed principles: Lauderdale had long been a zealous and bigotted Presbyterian; and however he might dissemble in public, the opinions of that sect had still a considerable influence on his mind.

The pernicious councils of the cabal, though from the first they were strongly suspected, appeared not in their full light till some time after. Such were the notions, which they infused into the king and duke, and which these princes were but too apt to imbibe.

They

They said, that the parliament, notwithstanding their seeming attachment to the crown, were extremely tenacious of those powers and privileges, which their predecessors had extorted from the sovereign: that after the first flow of kindness, occasioned by the joy of his majesty's restoration, they had exhibited some strong symptoms of discontent; and would be sure to employ against the king all the authority which they yet possessed, and still more those pretensions, which it was easy for them in a moment to advance: that they not only retained the king in dependance by means of his precarious revenue, but had never shown a becoming generosity, even in those temporary supplies, which they had given him: that it was now time for the prince to assert his independance, and to attempt the recovery of those prerogatives, which his predecessors, during so many ages, had peaceably exercised: that the great error of his father consisted in neglecting to contract any firm alliance with foreign princes, who on the commencement of the civil wars, might have found it for their interest to assist him: that the present engagements, being formed with so many weaker potentates, who themselves wanted the king's protection, could never serve to support, much less to
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increase, the royal authority: that the French monarch, a prince of so much generosity, and so nearly related to the king, would, if properly gratified, be found both able and willing to defend the common cause of kings against encroaching subjects: that a war, carried on against Holland by the combined force of two such potent princes, would prove an easy undertaking, and would answer all the ends which were at present proposed: that under pretence of that war it could not be difficult to raise an army, without which, while his subjects were so strongly possessed with republican principles, it would be impossible for the king to assert his prerogative: that his navy might be maintained, partly by the supplies, which, on other pretexts, the parliament might be induced to grant; partly by subsidies from France; partly by prizes, which might be taken from that wealthy republic: that, in such a situation, endeavours to retrieve the lost authority of the crown, could hardly fail of success; nor would any one presume to oppose a prince, supported by so powerful an alliance; or if they did, they would only expose themselves to the more certain and inevitable ruin: and that by the conquest of Holland, a great step would be taken towards reforming the govern-

vern-

vernment of England; since it was evident, that that republic, by its wealth and grandeur, strengthened, in his factious subjects, their attachment to what they esteemed their civil and religious liberties.

These wicked councils happened fatally to concur with all the inclinations and prejudices of the king; his desire of absolute authority, his attachment to the Catholic faith, his insatiable thirst after money. He appears likewise, from the very beginning, to have conceived a strong jealousy against his own subjects, and, on that account, an ambition of strengthening himself by a firm alliance with France.

So early as the year 1664, he had promised to suffer the French monarch to subdue Flanders without opposition, provided that prince would undertake to assist him with ten thousand foot, and a proportionable number of horse, in case of any commotions in England. As no symptoms of discontent at that time appeared, it is easy, from this incident, to form a notion of Charles's arbitrary and despotic principles.

Even while the triple league was negotiating, the king never seems to have been perfectly sincere in those popular measures, but still to have retained a secret desire of the French alliance. Clifford, who enjoyed

a great share of his confidence, said unwarily, "Notwithstanding all this joy, we must have a second war with Holland." The accession of the emperor to the triple alliance had been refused by England on the most absurd pretences; and many ridiculous complaints were made against the Dutch with regard to Surinam, and the conduct of the East-India-company.

But in the spring of 1669, were discovered the strongest symptoms of those destructive measures, which were afterwards more openly embraced. About that time, De Wit waited upon Temple, and told him, that he came to pay him a visit, not as a minister but a friend. His errand, he said, was to inform him of a piece of intelligence which he had lately received from Puffendorf, the Swedish ambassador, who had touched at the Hague in his journey from Paris to his own country.

The French ministers, Puffendorf said, had been extremely industrious in persuading him, that the Swedes would soon have cause to repent of those measures, which they had lately adopted: that Spain would never make good the subsidies she had promised; nor would Holland alone be able to support them: that England would certainly desert them, and had already embraced

councils directly contrary to those which by the triple alliance she had engaged to pursue: and that the resolution was not the less firm and determined, that the matter was as yet known to very few either in the French or the English court.

Puffendorf seeming to question their information, Turenne produced a letter from Colbert de Croissy, the French envoy at London; in which, after taking notice of the success of his negotiations, and the favourable disposition of the English ministers, he subjoined; "and I have at last made them sensible of the whole extent of his majesty's liberality." From this anecdote, it is evident, that the practice of selling their country to foreign princes, a practice, of all others, the most odious and detestable, was not unknown to Charles's ministers.

The king however, though extremely fond of the French alliance, seems never to have been fully determined, till the visit, which he received from his sister, the dutchess of Orleans. Lewis, well acquainted with the art and address of that amiable princess, and the great ascendant which she had acquired over her brother, had prevailed on her to exert all her interest, in order to draw

draw off England from the triple league, which, he was sensible, had raised an invincible barrier to his own ambition.

The better to conceal his intentions, he pretended to visit his frontiers, particularly the great works which he had begun at Dunkirk; and he was accompanied in his journey by the queen and the whole court. While he continued on the opposite shore, the dutchess of Orleans passed over to England; and was received by Charles at Dover, where they spent ten days together in great joy and festivity. By her powerful insinuations she persuaded her brother to abandon the plainest maxims of policy and honour, and to complete his agreement with Lewis for the reduction of Holland.

No particular articles seem to have been settled, or even so much as mentioned. Neither of the princes had any claims on that republic; and they could therefore conduct their measures only by their future success. With regard to the project, which Charles is so justly suspected to have formed, of employing the French power, or at least the terror of it, for enslaving his subjects at home, it was of such a nature as could not be previously concerted, and it was sufficient, for the present, if he united his interests with those of France, and received a general promise

mise of assistance, in case of any domestic disturbance.

But Lewis, knowing the disposition of Charles, and the natural inconstancy of his temper, resolved, if possible, to engage him in his interest by the ties of pleasure, the only ones which with him were irresistible; and he made him a present of a French mistress, by whose means, he expected, for the future, to direct him in all his measures. The dutchess of Orleans was attended by a young lady of the name of Querouaille, whom the king had no sooner seen, than he was instantly captivated with her charms.

He carried her along with him to London, and soon after created her dutchess of Portsmouth. She maintained her influence over him during the whole course of his life, and was a great means of preserving him firm in his connexions with her native country. The drift of all these artifices was so plain and evident, that it could hardly escape the penetration of a prince of Charles's character; but he was too much a slave to pleasure ever to resist its present allurements.

The joy, which Charles derived from his new alliance, was greatly damped by the death of his sister, and still more by those unhappy circumstances, with which it was attended. Soon after her return to Paris, she

she was carried off by a sudden illness; and she was seized with the distemper upon drinking a glass of succory water.

Strong suspicions of poison prevailed in the court of France, and were propagated all over Europe; and as her husband had betrayed some symptoms of jealousy on account of her free and easy behaviour, he was universally supposed to be the author of her death. Charles himself was fully persuaded of his guilt; but, as the misfortune was irreparable, he thought proper to admit the exculpations of the French king, who affirmed, that the physicians, on opening her body, found no foundation for the general rumour.

So far, indeed, was he from breaking with France upon this incident, that he took occasion from it to dispatch the duke of Buckingham to Paris, under pretext of condoling with the duke of Orleans, but in reality with a view of putting a finishing hand to the secret alliance. Never ambassador was distinguished by such marks of honour and respect. The more pernicious the present measures were to England, the more necessary was it for Lewis to court and caress those who were so base as to promote them.

Buckingham's journey filled the Dutch with strong suspicions, which every circumstance contributed still farther to strengthen. Lewis, all of a sudden, invaded Lorraine with a powerful army; and though he failed of seizing the duke himself, who was totally unapprized of the danger, and who very narrowly escaped, he soon was able without opposition to reduce the whole dutchy to subjection. Had any thing been wanting to arouse the jealousy and indignation of the neighbouring potentates, this unprovoked invasion must have been sufficient; for Lewis neither had, nor yet pretended to alledge, the least pretext of equity or justice to excuse his ambitious measures.

The duke of Lorraine, in his present distress, applied to the king of England for succour; hoping that the money which he had lent him during his exile, and the offer which he had made of serving him with all his forces, would naturally engage that prince to afford him some assistance. But Charles was devoid of all sense of gratitude; and the measures which he had lately adopted were perfectly consistent with the operations of Lewis. He therefore told the duke, that he was sorry for what happened; but that the present violence, like the mis-
chiefs

chiefs of a sudden inundation, must be borne with patience.

The Dutch, however, though strongly suspicious of the designs of Charles, were never fully convinced of his insincerity, till the recall of Sir William Temple, the English resident in Holland. That minister had acquired so great a reputation for honour and integrity, that he was deemed incapable, notwithstanding his master's orders, of promoting measures, which he considered as destructive to the interest of his country; and so long as he continued ambassador, De Wit thought himself secure of the friendship of England.

Charles was so conscious of this circumstance, that he ordered Temple to leave his family at the Hague, pretending, that he only wanted to confer with him about some private affair, after which he should be allowed to return. This artifice was too gross to impose upon De Wit: he ordered the Dutch ambassador to acquaint Charles, that he would regard the recall of Temple as an undoubted proof of a change of measures in England; and would even put the same construction upon any delay of his return. Had the king possessed the least sense of shame, he must surely have blushed on the present occasion; to see his

his own most solemn promises so openly distrusted ; while his servant had established so firm a character for honour and sincerity, and by his own merit, acquired the confidence of the neighbouring nations.

The parliament meeting on the twenty-fourth of October, the king addressed them in a short speech ; and left the business to be explained by the lord keeper. That minister represented the pressing exigencies of the state, and the absolute necessity of an immediate supply ; the augmentation of the naval power of France, three times equal to what it was before the Dutch war ; the remarkable decay of the English navy ; the expediency of equipping next year a fleet of fifty sail ; and the several engagements, which the king had contracted with the different states of Christendom. Among other treaties, he took notice of the triple league, and the defensive alliance with the Dutch.

Whither Bridgeman was conscious of the king's insincerity in both these treaties, is hard to determine : certain it is, he was not admitted into the secrets of the cabal ; and perhaps he thought that his suspicions, however strong, were not sufficient to make him disobey his majesty's orders, who had enjoined him to insist particularly on these topics ;

topics ; hoping by that means, to obtain a supply from the parliament.

The artifice answered the end proposed. The commons, ignorant of the king's intentions, voted him a considerable supply. A land tax of a shilling a pound was granted for a year ; two shillings a pound on two thirds of the salaries of offices ; fifteen shillings on every hundred pounds of banker's money and stock ; an additional excise upon beer for six years, and certain impositions for nine years upon law proceedings. Never had a larger supply been granted by the parliament ; and never surely was it less deserved by the councils of the king and of his ministers.

Another bill was passed in the lower house for imposing a duty on tobacco, Scotch salt, glasses, and some other commodities. Against this bill the merchants of London presented a petition to the house of lords. The lords took their objections into consideration, and began to make some alterations in the bill, which had been transmitted by the commons.

The commons were highly offended at this attempt, which they considered as an infringement of their undoubted right of regulating, entirely, the money-bills. Conferences were held between the houses in order

order to compromise the quarrel; but, instead of coming to an amicable agreement, they carried the dispute to such a height, that the king was obliged to prorogue the parliament; and by that means lost the money which had been voted him.* This is the last time, that the peers have insisted on any pretensions of that nature. Ever since, the privilege of the commons, in every place except in the house of peers, has been deemed unquestionable.

There happened, in the course of this session, a private affair, which gave great offence to the house of commons, and which was with some difficulty accommodated. It was usual with those who opposed the court in the money bills, if they could not carry the main point of refusing entirely the supply, to impose the tax on such articles as they imagined would be disagreeable, or would prove unequal to the occasion,

A proposal was made for laying an imposition upon play-houses: the courtiers alleged, that this was a very improper tax, as the players were the king's servants, and part of his pleasure. Sir John Coventry, a gentleman of the country party, asked, "whether the king's pleasure lay among
" the

“ the male or the female players ?” This sarcasm was levelled at Charles, who, besides his mistresses of higher quality, kept, at that time, two actresses, Davis, and Nell Gwin.

The king, who had a natural turn for wit himself, would probably have borne with this raillery, had he not been dissuaded by his courtiers. It was observed, that this being the first time, when an affront had been offered to majesty, it was requisite, by some severe chastisement, to punish Coventry for his insolence, and to deter others who might be disposed to follow his example. Sandys, Obrian, Parry, Reeves, and others of the guards were ordered to attack him in the streets, and to set a mark upon him. He made a brave and obstinate resistance ; and after wounding several of the assailants, was with great difficulty over-powered. They slit his nose with a knife, in order, as they said, to teach him, for the future, to treat the king with greater respect. What a shame, that the sovereign, who is always the executor, and who ought to be the guardian of the laws, should himself condescend to violate those very laws, in order to revenge a private quarrel.

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The commons, as might naturally be expected, were incensed at this assault made upon one of their members, on account of words spoken in the house. They enacted a law, which afterwards passed by the name of the Coventry-act, declaring it capital to maim any person; and they added a clause to the bill, by which those criminals, who had attacked Coventry, were rendered incapable of receiving a pardon from the crown.

But if the king was here accused of too much severity, he was as much condemned for a capricious lenity, in another affair, which happened about this period. Blood, a disbanded officer of the protector's, had been concerned in a plot for exciting a rebellion in Ireland; and for this crime he himself had been attainted, and some of his confederates capitally punished. The daring villain projected a scheme of revenge against Ormond, the lord lieutenant. Having by some means drawn off the duke's footmen, he assaulted his coach in the night as he drove along St. James's street in London, and made himself master of his person.

He might here have accomplished his design, had he not meditated refinements in his vengeance: he was determined to hang the duke at Tyburn; and with that view bound him, and set him on horseback behind

hind one of his companions. He himself, mean while, rode on, and actually fixed a rope to the gallows. The other accomplices had got as far as Berkley, now Devonshire, house, when the duke endeavouring to recover his liberty, threw himself on the ground, and brought along with him the assassin, to whom he was tied. They were struggling together in the mud; when Ormond's servants, who were apprized of their master's danger, came up and preserved his life. By this time Blood had returned; and he and his companions finding it impossible to regain their prize, discharged their pistols in a hurry at the duke, and riding off, escaped by means of the darkness.

Strong suspicions at first prevailed, that Buckingham was the author of this attempt. His hatred to Ormond was well known; and his profligate character made him be deemed capable of almost any crime.

Ossory, son to Ormond, seems to have been fully convinced of his guilt. That nobleman came soon after to court, and observing Buckingham stand by the king, his passion rose, and he broke forth into the following exclamation. "My lord," said said he, "I well know, that you are at the bottom of this late attempt upon my fa-
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“ ther : but I give you warning, if by any
 “ means he come to a violent end, I shall
 “ confider you as the affassin : I shall treat
 “ you as fuch ; and wherever I meet you,
 “ I shall pistol you, though you stood be-
 “ hind the king’s chair ; and I tell it you in
 “ his majesty’s prefence, that you may be fure
 “ I shall be as good as my word.” If there
 was here any failure of respect, it was easily
 forgiven in a generous youth, when his fa-
 ther’s life was in fuch imminent danger.

Soon after Blood laid a scheme for carry-
 ing off the crown and regalia from the
 tower ; and had well nigh fucceeded in the
 attempt. He had bound and wounded Ed-
 wards, the keeper of the jewel-office ; and
 had got out of the tower with his prey ; but
 was ftopped and apprehended in the ftreets,
 together with fome of his accomplices.*
 One of them was known to have had a
 hand in the affault upon Ormond : and
 Blood

* This attempt of Blood’s is fo expreffive of the rogue’s
 character ; it was concerted with fo much art, and
 conducted with fo much boldness, that it may not be
 improper to relate the particulars at full length.
 The beft account of it is that given by Edwards him-
 felf to Sir Gilbert Talbot, and is as follows.

About three weeks before Blood made his attempt
 upon the crown, he came to the tower in the habit of
 a clergyman, with a long cloak, caffock, and canon-
 cal

Blood was immediately supposed to be the ring-leader. When questioned on the sub-

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ject,

cal girdle; and brought a woman with him, whom he called his wife, though his real wife was then sick in Lancashire. This pretended wife desired to see the crown; and after she had seen it, she affected to be seized with a qualm in her stomach, and begged Mr. Edwards, the keeper of the crown, to send for some spirits. The old gentleman complied with her request; and when she had drank it, she was invited by Mrs. Edwards to repose herself on a bed; a favour which she readily accepted, and soon recovered. At their departure they expressed the grateful sense they had of the civility which had been shown them. About three days after, Blood came again to Mr. Edwards's, with a present of four pair of fine new gloves from his wife; and having thus begun the acquaintance, took care to improve it by frequent visits, declaring that he should never be able to reward their kindness.

Having intermitted his compliments for a short time, he returned again, and told Mrs. Edwards, that his wife could talk of nothing but the kindness of the good people in the tower; that she had long studied, and at length bethought herself of a handsome way of requital. "You have," said he, "a pretty gentlewoman to your daughter; and I have a young nephew, who has two or three hundred pounds a year in land, and is at my disposal: if your daughter be free, and you approve of it, I will bring him hither to see her, and we will endeavour to make it a match." Old Mr. Edwards was charmed with the proposal, and invited the pretended parson to dine with him that day. The other as readily

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jest, he boldly acknowledged the fact; but refused to discover his confederates, "The
" fear

dily accepted the invitation, and taking upon him to say grace, performed the ceremony with singular devotion and lifting up of the eyes; and likewise concluded his long-winded blessing with a hearty prayer for the king, the queen, and royal family. After dinner he went up to see the rooms, and discovering a handsome case of pistols there, he expressed a great desire to buy them, to present to a young lord, who was his neighbour, probably with a view of disarming the house against the time he intended to put his design in execution. At his departure, which was with a canonical benediction of the good company, he appointed a day and hour, to bring his young nephew to see his mistress, which was that very day that he made his bold attempt, the ninth of May, about seven in the morning.

At that time the old man had got up ready to receive his guests; and the daughter had put herself into her best dress to meet her gallant: when parson Blood, and three more came to the jewel-office, all armed, with rapier-blades in their canes, and every one a dagger, and a pair of pocket-pistols. Two of his companions entered with him, and the third staid at the door, in order to keep watch. The daughter thought it not modest for her to come down till she was called; but sent her maid to take a view of the company, and to bring her a description of the person of her gallant. The maid imagined, that he who stood at the door was the intended bridegroom, because he was the youngest of the company; and returned to give her mistress an account of his stature and complexion.

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“fear of death,” he said, “should never induce him, either to deny a crime, or to betray a friend.”

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Mean while Blood told Mr. Edwards, that they would not go up stairs till his wife came, and desired him to show his friends the crown, to pass away the time in the interim. As soon as they had entered the room where the crown was kept, and the door, as usual, was shut behind them, they threw a cloak over the old man's head, and clapped a gag into his mouth, which they fastened close with a piece of waxed leather, tied round his neck. At the same time they put an iron hook into his nose, that no sound might pass from him that way. Having thus secured him from crying out, they plainly told him, that they were determined to have the crown, the globe, and sceptre, and if he would quietly submit, they would spare his life; otherwise he must expect no mercy. Notwithstanding this menace, he endeavoured to make all the noise he could, in order, if possible, to alarm the house; upon which they knocked him down with a wooden mallet; telling him, at the same time, that, upon his next attempt to discover them, they would put an instant end to his life, and pointed three daggers at his breast. Still he strained himself to make the greater noise; upon which they gave him nine or ten strokes more upon the head with the mallet, and stabbed him in the belly.

The poor man, who was almost eighty years of age, fell into a swoon, and lay for some time in that condition; when one of them kneeling on the ground to try if he breathed, and not perceiving any signs of life in him, said, “he's dead, I'll warrant him.” Mr. Ed-

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A man so remarkable for his wickedness, could not fail to become the subject of general

Edwards, recovering a little, heard him, and thinking it safest for himself to be thought so, lay very quietly. Apprehensive of no farther trouble from the old man, they neglected to tie his hands behind him; and Parret, one of the company, put the globe into his breeches: Blood kept the crown under his cloak: the third was ordered to file the sceptre in two, because it was too long to be carried conveniently; and then to put it into a bag, which had been brought for that purpose.

But before this could be done, young Mr. Edwards, son of the old gentleman, just come from Flanders, happened to arrive, and approaching the door, the person who stood centinel, asked him what were his commands. He answered, that he belonged to the house; but perceived by his question, that he himself was a stranger; adding, that if he had any business with his father, he would go and acquaint him; and accordingly went up stairs, where he was welcomed by his mother, wife, and sister. Mean while, the centinel apprized them of the son's arrival, and they immediately hastened away with the crown and globe; but left the sceptre, not having time to file it.

The old man, returning to himself, got suddenly up, pulled off the gag, and cried out *Treason! Murder!* The daughter, hearing him, ran down, and seeing her father wounded and bleeding, rushed out upon Tower-hill, and cried, *Treason! the Crown is stolen!* This gave the first alarm; and Blood and Parret making great haste, were observed to jog each other with their elbows as they went, which caused them to be suspected
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neral conversation; and the king was prompted by an idle curiosity to see and con-

and pursued. By this time, young Edwards, and one captain Beckman, upon the cry of the daughter, were come down, and left the old gentleman, to run after the villains, but they were advanced beyond the main-guard; and the alarm being giving to the warder at the draw-bridge, he put himself in a posture of defence.

Blood came up first and discharged a pistol at him; the bullet missed him; but either the fire or fear made him fall to the ground, by which means they got safe to the little Ward-house gate, where one Sill, an old soldier of Cromwell's, stood centinel. This fellow, seeing the fate of the other warder, made no resistance; so that the villains escaped over that draw-bridge, and through the other gate upon the wharf, and made all possible haste towards their horses, which attended at St. Catherine's-Gate, called the Iron Gate, crying out, as they run, *Stop the rogues!* and the grave canonical habit of Blood made them be thought innocent.

In a short time, captain Beckman overtook them; upon which Blood discharged a pistol at his head; but the captain stooping, avoided the shot, and seized the villain with the crown under his cloak: yet Blood had the impudence, though he saw himself a prisoner, to struggle violently for the crown; and when it was wrested from him, he said, *It was a gallant attempt, though unsuccessful; for it was for a crown.*

A servant of captain Sherborne's secured Parret before Blood was taken; and there was so much hurry and confusion in the pursuit, that it was a wonder some innocent persons were not killed in the fray; for young Ed-

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converse with so extraordinary a person. Blood was no sooner informed of this circumstance.

Edwards, overtaking one, who was bloody from the scuffle, and supposing him to be one of his father's murderers, was going to stab him, had he not been hindred by captain Beckman. Even Beckman himself, as he was running in the pursuit, was in danger of being shot by the guards, who took him for one of the rogues; but a soldier, who fortunately knew him, cried out, "he's a friend!"

Blood and Parret being secured, Hunt, another of the villains, and son-in-law to Blood, mounted on horseback, with two more of the conspirators, and rode off at full gallop; but a cart chancing to turn shott in the street, Hunt ran his head against a post, which struck him such a blow as brought him to the ground. In a moment, however, he recovered himself, and was going to remount, when a cobbler running up, cried, "This is Tom Hunt, who was concerned in the bloody business against the duke of Ormond: let us secure him." A constable being accidentally present, seized him upon this affirmation; and he, with Blood and Parret, was committed to safe custody in the tower.

Parret was a silk-dyer, in Southwark; and, during the civil wars, had been lieutenant to major-general Harrison. In the struggle for the crown, the great pearl and diamond fell off, and were missing for a while, with some other stones of less value; but the pearl was found by a poor sweeping woman, and the diamond by a barber's apprentice, and both of them were faithfully restored. Other small stones were picked

cumstance, than he conceived the hope of obtaining a pardon; and he well knew how to avail himself of the present opportunity.

He told the king, that he and others had entered into a conspiracy to kill him with a carabine above Battersea, where his majesty was frequently wont to bathe; that he was prompted to this resolution by the severity exercised over the consciences of the godly, in restraining the freedom of their religious assemblies: that when he had taken his stand among the reeds for this purpose, he felt his heart struck with an awe of majesty; and not only relented himself, but diverted his associates from their design: that he well knew, that, by this confession, he had laid himself open to the lash of the law, and might reasonably expect the utmost rigour of justice, for which, with regard to himself, he was sufficiently prepared; yet could he not forbear giving the king warning of the danger which might attend his execution: that his associates had bound themselves by the strictest oaths to revenge the death of any

picked up by several persons, and all of them were religiously delivered. The fair ballas ruby, belonging to the sceptre, was found in Parret's pocket; so that nothing considerable was lost: the crown only was bruised, but was soon repaired.

any of the confederacy : that this combination would expose the king and all ministers to the daily fear of assassination ; but on the other hand, if his majesty would spare a few, he might oblige many, who, as they had been seen to attempt daring crimes, would be as bold, if received into favour, in performing eminent services to the crown.

What effect these representations had upon the king ; whether they inspired him with fear, or moved him with admiration, it is impossible, at this distance of time, to determine ; certain it is, he took the strange resolution of pardoning Blood ; a measure, which exposed him then, and has exposed his memory ever since, to great and deserved censure. Arlington came to Ormond in the king's name, and begged he would not prosecute Blood, for certain reasons which he was commanded to give him. The duke replied with great manaminy, that his majesty's command was the only reason, that could be given, and therefore he might spare the rest.

But Charles was not content with granting a pardon to Blood ; he carried his indulgence to him still farther : he bestowed upon him an estate of five hundred pounds a year in Ireland ; he allowed him to attend at court, and frequently admitted him into his presence ; he even distinguished him
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with several marks of personal regard, and many people applied to him as the most proper person to promote their suits. And while old Edwards, who had bravely risked his life, and had even been dangerously wounded in defending the crown and regalia, was almost forgotten and neglected, this man, who could only be considered as a monster of vice and wickedness, became a kind of royal favourite.

No wonder, that a conduct in the king, so big with error and absurdity, should fill the minds of the people with discontent and ill-humour; and this spirit of dissatisfaction, was still farther increased by another incident, which happened about the same period. The dutchess of York was seized with a mortal distemper; and on her death-bed, she openly possessed the Romish religion, and concluded her life in that communion. Some thought, that the unhappy princess, had, contrary to her conscience, been persuaded by her husband, to sign a paper, containing the grounds of her conversion.

The old earl of Clarendon, who now resided in France, was no sooner informed of his daughter's apostacy, than he expressed the greatest sorrow and uneasiness, and wrote her a long and learned letter on the subject, inclosed

closed in one to the duke; but this letter came too late to have any good effect. The death and conversion of his dutchess put an end to the disguise, which the duke of York had hitherto worn; and he now openly avowed his attachment to the church of Rome. This circumstance tended still farther to alarm and disgust the whole nation.

Popery, which the court sycophants had hitherto represented as an imaginary spectre, was now become a real ground of terror, being openly and zealously professed by the heir apparent to the crown, a prince determined and even obstinate in his purpose; while the king himself was strongly suspected of the like attachments. From such dangerous prepossessions, it was justly apprehended, that these princes had formed a kind of conspiracy against the people, and had already, in this respect at least, adopted a separate interest, the foundation of many other designs and projects, which time alone could unfold. Nor was it to be imagined, that a nation, which had conceived such an inveterate antipathy against a system of religion, revered by these princes as sacred and divine, and which seemed resolved, at all hazards, to prevent its re-establishment, could

could ever be the object of their love and affection.

It is not improbable, that the French alliance might encourage the duke to make open profession of his religion, and render him more regardless of the esteem and attachment of the English. The effects of this alliance became every day more apparent. Temple was deprived of the employment of ambassador to the States; and Downing, whom the Dutch considered as their implacable enemy, was appointed in his place. In order to create a ground of quarrel, a yacht, dispatched for lady Temple, was ordered to fire on the Dutch fleet, which lay on their own coasts; and continue the fire, until they should strike their colours.

The captain obeyed his orders. Van Ghent, the Dutch admiral, astonished at this insult, came on board the yacht, and declared himself willing to pay all the respect to the British flag, which was due by ancient custom; but that a fleet on their coasts should strike to a single vessel, and that only a pleasure-boat, was, he said, such a mark of submission as he could not give without express orders from his masters. The captain, thinking it unsafe to renew firing in the midst of the Dutch fleet, pro-

ceeded on his voyage; and for this neglect of orders was sent to the tower on his arrival.

This affair, however trifling, supplied Downing with a new article to augment the number of those ridiculous pretexts, on which it was resolved to found the intended quarrel. The English court made no complaints for several months; lest, if they had required satisfaction sooner, the Dutch might have had time to give it. Even when Downing presented his memorial, he was strictly enjoined to accept no satisfaction after a certain number of days; a very imperious manner of treating, and impossible to be observed in Holland, where the forms of the State render delays unavoidable.

An answer, however, though rejected by Downing, was transmitted to London by the hands of an ambassador extraordinary, who was impowered to make any concession, which might be demanded by the court of England. That court alledged, that the answer of the Dutch was vague and evasive; but they could not point out any articles or expressions, which were liable to that objection.

The Dutch ambassador intreated the English ministry to frame an answer in any terms they thought proper; and he promised to subscribe it: the English ministry replied,
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that it was not their business to draw papers for the Dutch. The ambassador drew up the form of an answer, and asked them whether they approved of it: the English said, that when he had subscribed and delivered it, he should hear their opinion concerning it.

The Dutchman determined to subscribe it at a venture; and on his desiring a new conference, an hour was fixed for that purpose. But when he came at the time appointed, the English declined to enter upon business, and told him that the season for treating was now past. To such base and disingenuous arts were the king and his ministry obliged to have recourse, in order to foment a quarrel with Holland! arts, which would reflect eternal disgrace on the nation that practised them; were it not, that the general character of a people must never suffer for the sake of a few miscreants, who may happen to engross the administration of the government.

Nor was the king's treatment of foreign states more haughty and imperious, than his conduct at home was arbitrary and despotic. His want of œconomy and expensive pleasures had entirely exhausted his coffers; and the money he had obtained for the public service, had been so much embezzled, that

he could hope for no considerable supply from the voluntary grant of the people.

It seemed as yet imprudent to attempt the levying money without consent of parliament; since the power of taxing themselves was the privilege, which the English justly considered as the chief security of their liberties. Some other expedient must be devised. The king had declared, that the office of treasurer should be given to any one, that could find out the means of supplying the present necessities. Shaftsbury dropped a hint to Clifford, which the latter immediately laid hold of, and carried to the king, who bestowed on him the promised reward, together with a peerage. This device was the shutting up the exchequer, and retaining all the sums which should be payed unto it.

It had been a common practice with the bankers to carry their money to the exchequer, and to lend it upon the security of the funds, by which they were afterwards reimbursed, when the money was raised on the public. By this trade, the bankers gained eight, sometimes ten, per cent for sums, which they had either received without interest, or which they had borrowed at six per cent: profits, for which they paid dearly by this shameful violation of public faith.

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The project was so suddenly embraced, that no one was apprized of the danger. A general consternation was spread through the city, attended with the ruin of many. The bankers stopped payment; the merchants could answer no bills; diffidence and jealousy prevailed every where, together with an interruption of commerce, by which the trading part of the nation were reduced to the greatest necessities; and men, filled with the most terrible apprehensions, asked each other what could be the meaning of those mysterious councils, from which the parliament and all men of honour were excluded, and which began by the destruction of public credit, and an open breach of the most sacred engagements, both foreign and domestic.

The next measure of the court, however specious and plausible in appearance, was, when traced to its origin, no less expressive of those arbitrary and despotic designs, which the king and his ministry had adopted. Charles determined to exercise his supreme power in ecclesiastical matters; a power, he said, which was not only inherent in him, but which had been acknowledged by several acts of parliament. In virtue of this authority, he published a proclamation, suspending the penal laws, which had been made

against all Non-conformists or Recusants whatsoever, and granting to the Protestant dissenters the public exercise of their religion, to the Catholics the exercise of it in private houses.

An unsuccessful attempt of this nature, condemned by the parliament and retracted by the king, had already been made a few years after the restoration; but Charles imagined, that the parliament, at their next meeting, would be humbled into greater submission, and would no longer presume to oppose his measures. Mean while, the Dissenters, the most implacable enemies of the court, were softened by this toleration; and the Catholics, under this favour, were indulged in greater liberty than the laws had hitherto thought proper to grant them.

About the same time, the act of navigation was suspended. A proclamation was likewise published, extending the power of pressing beyond its usual limits: an other threatening the most severe punishments against those who dared to arraign his majesty's measures, and even against those, who heard such discourses, without immediately informing against the offenders: another against the importation or sale of any sorts of painted earthen ware, except those of China, upon pain of incurring such fines and punishments

as might be lawfully inflicted on those who contemned his majesty's authority.

A new army had been raised ; and it was found by experience, that discipline could not be maintained without the use of martial law, which was therefore restored by order of the council, though totally abolished by the petition of right. All these measures were of a very arbitrary and despotic nature, and were directly opposite to that legal constitution, which the parliament, after such violent convulsions and civil wars, had expected to establish in the kingdom.

It is observable, that the lord keeper, Bridgeman, had refused to put the seals to the edict for suspending the penal laws ; and was for that reason, though under other pretexts, deprived of his office. Shaftsbury was appointed chancellor in his place ; and thus another member of the Cabal received the reward of his iniquity.

The conduct of foreign affairs was perfectly consistent with these domestic transactions. A perfidious attempt was made upon the Dutch Smyrna-fleet before the declaration of war. That fleet, amounting to seventy sail, was valued at a million and a half ; and the prospect of gaining so rich a prize had been a principal motive for drawing Charles into the present war, and
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he had always regarded that capture as a chief resource for defraying the expences of his military preparations. Sir Robert Holmes was dispatched with nine frigates and three yachts in quest of this fleet; and he met admiral Sprague in the channel, who was returning home from a cruise in the Mediterranean. Sprague acquainted him with the near approach of the Hollanders; and had not Holmes, from a desire of securing to himself the whole honour and profit of the enterprize, concealed his orders, the union of these two squadrons had rendered the escape of the Dutch altogether impracticable.

When Holmes approached, he assumed a friendly appearance, and invited the Dutch admiral, Van Nefs, who conducted the convoy, to come on board of him: one of his captains sent a like insidious message to the rear admiral. But these officers were not so easily deceived. They had been previously informed of the designs of the English, and had already put all the ships of war and merchantmen into an excellent posture of defence. Three times were they desperately attacked by the English; and as often did they bravely repel the assailants. In the third assault, one of the Dutch ships of war was taken, together with three or four of
their

their smallest merchantment. The rest, fighting with great courage and conduct, pursued their course; and partly by the prudence of their officers, partly by the favour of a thick mist, got safe into their own harbours.

The Dutch loudly exclaimed against this treacherous attempt, made upon an ally in time of profound peace, and who had not given the least cause of provocation. The English ministry endeavoured to excuse the action, by alledging, that it was an accidental rencounter, owing to the obstinacy of the Dutch, who had refused the compliment of the flag: but the falsity of this pretence was so well known, that even Holmes himself had not the impudence to persist in the assertion.

Till this attempt, the States, notwithstanding all the threats and preparations of the English, never supposed them to be truly in earnest; and had always hoped, that the affair would at last be compromised in an amicable manner. The French themselves had put little confidence in the promises of England: and could scarce believe, that their ambitious designs would, contrary to every dictate of sound policy, be promoted by that power, which was most concerned and most able to defeat them.

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But the views of Charles were far from being regulated by a regard to national interest. He immediately proclaimed war against the Dutch ; and surely reasons more absurd and ridiculous were never employed to cover a flagrant violation of treaty. Complaints were made of injuries offered to the East-India-company, which yet that company disowned. The detention of some English subjects in Surinam was alledged ; though it was known, that they had remained voluntarily in that island : the refusal of a Dutch fleet on their own coasts to pay the honours of the flag to an English yacht is represented as an unpardonable insult : and, to complete the farce, mention was made of some abusive pictures, reflecting on the English nation.

The Dutch were long at a loss to find out the meaning of this article ; till at last it appeared, that a portrait of Cornelius de Wit, brother to the pensionary, painted by order of some magistrates of Dort, and hung up in a chamber of the town-house, had furnished a pretext for the complaint. On the back-ground of this portrait, the painter had represented some ships on fire in a harbour. This was supposed to be Chatham, where De Wit had actually behaved with great courage and conduct ; but little
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did he dream, that while the insult itself seemed entirely to be forgotten, the picture of it would expose his country to such severe and heavy vengeance. The conclusion of this manifesto, where the king declared that he was resolved to adhere to the triple alliance, was not more impudent than the other articles which it contained.

The French king's declaration of war discovered more sincerity, though equal violence and in justice. He alledged only, that the conduct of the Hollanders had been such that he could not, consistently with his glory, any longer bear That monarch had made mighty preparations for the prosecution of his ambitious projects; and every thing seemed to promise a successful issue to his unjustifiable enterprizes.

Sweden had deserted the triple league; the bishop of Munster was induced by large subsidies to join with France: the elector of Cologne had engaged in the same alliance; and having delivered Bonne and other towns into the hands of Lewis, magazines were there established; and it was from that side, that France intended to attack the United Provinces. The standing force of that kingdom consisted of one hundred and eighty thousand men; and with more than one half
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of this immense army was the king now advancing towards the Dutch frontiers.

The Hollanders, as might naturally be expected, were filled with terror and consternation; and this spirit of dejection was still farther increased by the defenceless condition in which their country was at that time placed, and the violent factions which rent and distracted their councils. De Wit, who now directed the administration, sensible, that the secret alliance between France and England, was destructive to the interests of the latter kingdom, had flattered himself, that it would be of short continuance; and, in that hope, had neglected to make such preparations as the present danger seemed to require.

By a long and constant application to trade, the people were become extremely unwarlike, and depended entirely for their defence on that mercenary army, which they supported. After the treaty of Westphalia, the States, confiding in their peace with Spain, and their alliance with France, had disbanded a great part of their army, and maintained not with proper care the discipline of the forces which remained.

When the Orange faction was overthrown, it was deemed expedient to discard many of the old experienced officers, who
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were attached to that family; and their places were filled with raw youths, the sons or relations of burgo-masters, who composed the opposite party. These new officers, trusting to the interest of their friends and family, neglected their military duty; and some of them, it is affirmed, were even permitted to send deputies in their room, to whom they allotted a small part of their pay.

During the war with England, all the troops of that nation had been dismissed: Lewis's invasion of Flanders, together with the triple league, produced the recall of the French regiments; and the place of those forces, which had ever had a principal share in all the wars in the Low Countries, had never been supplied by any new levies.

De Wit, conscious of the imminent danger which threatened his country, endeavoured to prepare against the approaching storm, in the best manner he could. But every expedient, which he recommended, was strongly opposed by the Orange party, which now began to regain the ascendant. The long and vigorous administration of this statesman had created him many enemies: the present incidents gave them a pretext for imputing, to his mismanagement,

bad situation of the republic: and above all the popular attachment to the young prince, which had so long been restrained by the prevalence of the aristocratic party, and had thence acquired an additional force, began to appear, and to menace the state with some great revolution.

William the third, prince of Orange, was now in the twenty-second year of his age, and exhibited strong symptoms of all those great qualities, which he afterwards displayed in so eminent a manner, through the whole course of his life. De Wit himself, by bestowing upon him an excellent education, and seasoning his mind with the maxims of sound policy, had generously contributed to render his rival so accomplished. Conscious of the precarious tenure of his own power, he was always determined, he said, by instructing him in the knowledge of public affairs, to qualify the prince for serving his country, if ever any future emergence should advance him to the government of the state.

The conduct of the young prince had hitherto been such as might naturally be expected from such an education. Notwithstanding his close connexions with England and Brandenburg, he had declared his resolution of relying entirely on the States

States for his promotion; and his whole deportment was perfectly agreeable to the genius of that people. Cautious and reserved; sonder of hearing than of speaking; of a sound judgment and solid understanding; great steadiness in all his resolutions; an unwearied application to business; a total indifference about pleasure: by these, and the like virtues, he attracted the attention of all men: and the people, conscious, that, to his family, they were indebted for their liberty, and very existence, and remembering, that his great uncle, prince Maurice, had been able, even in more early youth, to defend them against the ambitious projects of Spain, were desirous of investing this prince with all the authority of his ancestors, and hoped, that, in his courage and conduct, they should find security against those imminent dangers, which every where seemed to be gathering round them.

While these two rival parties contended for the mastery, every proposal for public defence was thwarted, every measure traversed. What was resolved with difficulty was executed without spirit. Soldiers indeed were enlisted, and the army augmented to seventy thousand men: the prince was declared commander in chief as well of the land as of the sea forces, and the whole military power

intrusted to him. But raw troops could not at once acquire the courage and discipline of hardy veterans, and the friends of the prince were still dissatisfied, while the “ perpetual edict,” as it was called, by which he was excluded from the stadtholdership, and from all share in the civil government, remained unaltered and unrepealed.

Mean while the naval preparations of the Dutch were in great forwardness ; and De Ruyter soon set sail with a formidable fleet, of ninety ships of war and forty four fireships, Cornelius de Wit was on board, as deputy from the States. They determined to go in quest of the English, who were commanded by the duke of York, and who had already joined the French under marshal d'Etrées. The combined fleets rode at Solebay in a very careless posture ; and the earl of Sandwich, a brave and experienced officer, had apprized the duke of the danger ; but the answer given him was such as implied a suspicion of his courage.

On the approach of the enemy, every one flew to his post with the utmost precipitation, and many ships were obliged to cut their cables in order to prepare for the action. Sandwich led the van ; and though resolved to conquer or die, he yet behaved with so much prudence, that to him the
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safety of the whole fleet was visibly owing. He hurried out of the bay, where it had been easy for De Ruyter with his fire-ships to have burned the combined fleets, which were cooped entirely within it; and by this wise measure he afforded time to the duke of York, who conducted the main body, and to marshal d'Etrées, admiral of the rear, to get out to open sea.

He himself, in the mean time, had begun the fight with undaunted courage; and by his determined and obstinate resistance, had drawn upon him the bravest of the enemy. He killed Van Ghent, the dutch admiral, who ventured to attack him: he sunk another ship, which endeavoured to board him: he sunk three fire-ships, which came full against him: and though his ship was shattered in pieces, and of a thousand men, which was his complement, near six hundred were already killed, he continued still to thunder with all his artillery in the midst of the enemy.

At last, however, another fire-ship unhappily laid hold of his vessel, and her destruction was now inevitable. Warned by his captain, Sir Edward Haddoc, he might have escaped the danger; but his great soul disdained to survive the disgrace, which the duke's injurious expression, he imagined,

had cast upon him : himself and all his crew that remained, were buried in the general ruin : and thus was destroyed one of the bravest and most gallant officers that ever England produced, by the insolent reflection of a young admiral, who, because, forsooth, he was of the blood-royal, believed he had a right to impeach the courage of those, who, whatever he might think himself, or whatever his flatterers might tell him, were possessed of more real valour than himself.

Mean while De Ruyter was engaged in close combat with the duke of York ; and the fight was maintained for two hours with great obstinacy on both sides. The duke's ship was so shattered, that he was obliged to quit her, and to remove his flag to another. His squadron was overpowered with numbers, and he was like to have met with the fate, which his conduct before the action had so well merited ; till at last Sir Joseph Jordan, who had succeeded to Sandwich's command, came to his rescue ; and the parties, being more equally matched, continued the fight till night, when the Dutch withdrew, and were not pursued by the enemy.

The loss, suffered by the English and Dutch fleets, was nearly equal ; if it did not rather
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fall more heavy on the former. The French received little or no damage, because they had hardly been concerned in the action; and it was generally supposed, that they had kept aloof on purpose, glad to see the two maritime powers, whom, though they were now engaged in close alliance with one of them, they equally envied and equally hated, destroy each other by their mutual animosity. Every other action during the present war contributed to strengthen this suspicion.

The Dutch had acquired great honour by fighting with some appearance of success the combined fleets of two such powerful nations; but nothing less than a complete victory could save their country from that destruction, which seemed to threaten it from every quarter. It was imagined, that the French would make their invasion on the side of Maastricht, a town well fortified, and supplied with a good garrison; but Lewis, availing himself of his alliance with Cologne, determined to attack the enemy, from that quarter, which was least capable of making defence.

The troops of that elector, and those of Munster, approached to the other side of the Rhine, and divided the force and attention of the States. The Dutch forces, too weak
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to protect so large a frontier, were dispersed into so many towns, that no considerable body could appear in the field, and a sufficient garrison could hardly be found in any fortress. Lewis crossed the Meuse at Viset; and sitting down before Orsoi, a town of the elector of Brandenburg, but garrisoned by the Dutch, he reduced it in three days. Having divided his army, he besieged at once Burik, Wesel, Emerik, Rhimberg, towns strongly fortified, and not destitute of garrisons; and in four days, he made himself master of all these places.

He next advanced to the banks of the Rhine, which he passed almost without opposition. A few Dutch regiments appeared on the other side, but were able to make no effectual resistance. The great drought of the season had reduced the waters so low, that he received as little interruption from the current as from the enemy: yet was this passage of the Rhine represented by the French poets and courtiers as the most glorious achievement performed either in ancient or modern times; and the flattery, however gross and and fulsome, was greedily swallowed by Lewis.

It was imagined, that Skink, one of the strongest fortresses in the Low Countries, would make some resistance; but it
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submitted to Turenne in a few days. Arnheim, Knotzembourg, and Nimeguen surrendered to the same general at the first summons. Doesbourg was reduced by Lewis: Harderwic, Amersfort, Campen, Rhenen, Viane, Elberg Zwol, Cuelemborg, Wageninguen, Lochem, Woerden soon shared the same fate. Groll, and Deventer were subdued by marshal Luxembourg, who commanded the troops of Munster. And every conquest added new courage to the victors, and struck the vanquished with fresh dismay.

The prince of Orange, with his small and disheartened army, withdrew into the province of Holland, hoping there, from the natural strength of the country, since all human art and courage were found ineffectual, to be able to make some resistance.. The town and province of Utrecht, seized with the general panic, sent deputations, and submitted to Lewis.

Naerden, a place within three leagues of Amsterdam, was entered by the marquis of Rochefort; and had he continued his march to Muyden, he had easily made himself master of it. Fourteen stragglers of his army having approached the gates of that town, the magistrates, taking them for the advanced guard of the enemy, sent them the
keys;

keys; but a servant maid, who was alone in the castle, by raising the drawbridge, happily preserved that fortress. The magistrates afterwards, finding their mistake, plied the stragglers so plentifully with liquor, that they made them drunk, and took the keys from them. Muyden is so near to Amsterdam, that its cannon command the entrance to the harbour of that city.

Lewis had now reduced the three provinces of Guelderland, Overijssel, and Utrecht; and threatened the rest with immediate subjection. The populace, and all those who favoured the Orange party, instead of exerting themselves for the preservation of their liberties, poured forth their whole indignation against the pensionary, for having neglected the means of defence. They reproached him as the friend of France, the author of all their calamities; and they considered the young prince of Orange as the only person who could save them from destruction.

In the midst of this despondence, the citizens of Amsterdam acted up to the noble example of their ancestors; and by concerting a regular plan of defence, endeavoured to infuse courage into the other cities. The magistrates obliged the burgesses to keep watch and ward: the populace, whom want
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of employment might excite to sedition, were maintained by regular pay, and armed for the defence of the public. Some ships, which lay useless in the harbour, were repaired, and stationed to protect the city; and the sluices being opened, the whole neighborhood was laid under water. All the other towns followed this example; so that the whole province was in a moment overflowed.

The states of Holland assembled, in order to deliberate, whether any means remained to save their lately flourishing, but now distressed commonweath. Though they were surrounded with waters, which effectually secured them from the approach of the enemy, their deliberations were not conducted with that unanimity, which alone could enable them to provide for their common safety. The nobles voted, that provided their religion, liberty, and sovereignty could be preserved, every thing else should be surrendered to the enemy. Eleven towns agreed to the same proposal.

Amsterdam alone protested against all treaty with insolent and ambitious enemies; but notwithstanding this opposition, ambassadors were sent to supplicate the mercy of the two combined monarchs, It was proposed to yield to Lewis Maestricht and
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all the frontier towns of the seven provinces, and to pay him a large sum for defraying the expences of the war.

Lewis consulted with his ministers, Louvois and Pomponne, concerning the measures, which he should pursue in the present conjuncture; and happily for Europe, he preferred the violent councils of the former. He promised to evacuate his conquests on condition, that the commodities of France should be imported duty-free into Holland; that the States should permit the free exercise of the Romish religion, share the churches between the Catholics and the Protestants, and appoint regular salaries for the maintenance of the priests; that they should yield to him all the frontier towns of the republic, together with Nimeguen, Skink, Knotzembourg, that part of Guelderland which lay on the other side of the Rhine; as likewise the isles of Bommel and Voorn, and the forts of St. Andrew, Louvestein, and Crevecœur; that they should pay him twenty millions of livres for the expence of the war; that they should every year send him a solemn embassy, and present him with a golden medal, as an acknowledgment, that to him they owed the preservation of that liberty, which the assistance of his predecessors had enabled them to acquire;

quire; and that they should give satisfaction to the king of England: and he allowed them but ten days for the acceptance or refusal of these exorbitant demands.

The ambassadors, who were sent to London, met with still worse reception: no minister was suffered to confer with them; and they were kept in a kind of confinement. But notwithstanding this cruel conduct of the court, the presence of the Dutch envoys awakened the sentiments of tender compassion, and even indignation, among the people in general, but especially among those who could discern the scope and result of these dangerous councils.

Charles himself began to be uneasy at the rapid progress of the French arms. Were Holland entirely subdued, its whole commerce and naval power, he saw, must become an accession to France; the Spanish Low Countries would soon be added to the same kingdom; and Lewis, now independent of his ally, would perhaps turn against him all that force which he had promised to employ in his assistance; at least would abandon him to the rage and resentment of his own discontented subjects.

These obvious consequences could not escape the penetration of Charles; but his natural indolence ever prevented him from

stretching his views to distant events; and besides he was desirous of sharing the spoils of the Dutch republic. He therefore dismissed their ambassadors, lest they should cabal among his subjects, who bore them great favour; and he sent over Buckingham and Arlington, and soon after lord Hallifax, to negociate anew with Lewis in the present posture of affairs. These two ministers passed through Holland; and as they were believed to bring peace to the distressed republic, they met with a most kind and hearty reception. "God
 " bless the king of England! God bless
 " the prince of Orange! confusion to the
 " States!" Such were the acclamations with which they were every where received.

They had several conferences with the States and the prince of Orange, but made no reasonable proposals for an accommodation. They repaired to Utrecht, where Lewis resided, renewed the league between him and Charles, and added a fresh clause, importing, that no peace should be made with Holland but by common consent.

They next produced their master's pretensions, of which the following were the principal articles; that the Dutch should
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yield the honour of the flag without the least reserve or limitation, nor should whole fleets, even on the coast of Holland, refuse to strike and lower their topsails to the smallest ship carrying the British flag; that all persons, guilty of treason against the king, or of writing and publishing seditious libels, should, on complaint, be expelled for ever the dominions of the States; that the Dutch should pay the king a million sterling for defraying the expences of the war, together with ten thousand pounds a year for liberty to fish in the British seas; that they should share the trade of the East-Indies; that the prince of Orange and his descendants should possess the sovereignty of the United Provinces; at least that they should enjoy the dignities of stadtholder, admiral, and general, in as ample a manner as they had ever been held by any of his ancestors; and that the isles of Walcheren, Cadfant, Gorée, and Voorn, together with the town and castle of Sluys, should be put into the king's hands, as a security for the performance of articles.

The terms demanded by Lewis, deprived the republic of all protection against a land invasion from France; those required by Charles laid them equally open to an invasion by sea from England; and when both

were united, they seemed altogether intolerable, and reduced the Dutch, who were destitute of all means of defence, to the utmost despair and despondence. What rendered their condition still more deplorable, were the violent factions by which their councils were every where distracted. De Wit, too obstinate in supporting his own system of liberty, while the very being of the state was in danger, still persisted in opposing the repeal of the perpetual edict, now become the object of hatred to the Dutch populace.

Their rage at last broke through all restraint, and bore down every thing before it. They raised an insurrection at Dort, and by force compelled their burgo-masters to agree to the repeal, which was so much demanded. The other provinces needed but this hint to follow the same example. At Amsterdam, the Hague, Middlebourg, Rotterdam, the people ran to arms, and trampling under foot the authority of their magistrates, obliged them to declare in favour of the prince of Orange.

The superior abilities and virtues of De Wit had drawn upon him the general envy, and exposed him to the utmost fury of popular prejudices. Four assassins, influenced by no other motive than mistaken zeal, had
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attacked him in the streets ; and after piercing him with many wounds, had left him for dead. One of them was punished for the crime : the others were never called to an account.

His brother Cornelius, alike distinguished by his civil and military talents, was obliged by sickness to leave the fleet, and he was now confined to his house at Dort. The furious rabble broke in upon him ; and it was with extreme difficulty that his family and servants could protect him from their violence. At Amsterdam, the house of the brave De Ruyter, the chief support of the distressed republic, was assaulted by the desperate populace, and his wife and children were for some time in danger of being torn in pieces.

One Tichelaer, a barber, a man of an abandoned life and infamous character, accused Cornelius DeWit of a design against the life of the prince of Orange. The charge, though attended with the most improbable and even absurd circumstances, was readily believed by the credulous multitude ; and Cornelius was summoned before a court of judicature. The judges, either influenced by the same prejudices, or afraid of opposing the popular torrent, sentenced him to suffer the question.

This man, who had performed the most eminent services to his country, and who had enjoyed the highest dignities, was delivered into the hands of the executioner, and subjected to the utmost severity of the rack. He bore the torture with undaunted fortitude, still protesting his innocence; and frequently repeated the beautiful ode of Horace, beginning with, *Iustum et tenacem propositi virum*. But though no proof could be produced against him, he was condemned to lose his offices, and to be banished the republic.

The pensionary, who had not been intimidated by the popular fury from acting the part of an affectionate brother and faithful friend during this prosecution, determined not to abandon him on account of the undeserved infamy, which was attempted to be cast upon him. He repaired to his brother's prison, with a fixt resolution of attending him to the place of his exile, and of soothing his affliction by his company and presence.

Even this sad consolation, they were not suffered to enjoy. The desperate rabble rose in arms: they broke open the doors of the prison: they dragged out the two brothers: and a thousand ruffians vied with each other, who should first embrue his hands

hands in the blood of these two virtuous citizens. Even their death did not satiate the fury of the enraged multitude. They inflicted on the dead bodies of these worthy patriots, the most shocking indignities; and till tired with their own brutality, it was not allowed the friends of the deceased to approach, or to bestow on them the honours of a mournful and melancholy funeral.

The murder of the De Wits extinguished for the time the remains of their party; and all men, from fear, inclination, or prudence, were unanimous in submitting to the prince of Orange. The republic, though half reduced by foreign force, and as yet confounded by its numerous misfortunes, was firmly united under one leader, and began to recover that noble spirit of courage and independence, for which it had formerly been so famous.

William, worthy of that illustrious family from which he was descended, embraced sentiments becoming the head of a brave and free people. Far from taking advantage of the misfortunes of his country to advance his own power, he bent all his efforts against the common enemy. Those cruel conditions, demanded by their haughty enemies, he persuaded the States with scorn to reject; and by his advice they put an end

end to negotiations, which tended only to relax their military preparations, and prevent the assistance of their allies.

He demonstrated, that the numbers and riches of the people, seconded by the advantages of nature, would still, if properly employed, be sufficient to resist, at least interrupt the progress of the enemy, and preserve the remaining provinces, till the other nations of Europe, moved by a sense of common danger, could come to their succour. He said, that, as envy of their wealth and liberty had occasioned this mighty confederacy against them, it was in vain to hope by concessions to satisfy foes, whose pretensions were as little regulated by moderation as by justice. He reminded them of the glorious achievements of their ancestors, who, yet in the infancy of their state, sacrificed every thing to the preservation of liberty, and encouraging each other in the cause of their country, bid defiance to all the power, riches, and military discipline of Spain. And he declared his firm resolution to tread in the steps of his illustrious predecessors, and flattered himself, that, as they had invested him with the same dignity which their forefathers had bestowed upon the former princes of Orange, they
would

would assist his endeavours for the good of the public, with the same vigour and manly courage.

These bold and magnanimous councils produced a surprizing effect. The people seemed to be animated with the spirit of their young stadtholder. Those, who were lately overwhelmed with despair, assumed fresh courage, and bravely resolved to oppose the haughty victor, and to defend those last remains of their native soil, of which neither the invasion of Lewis nor the inundation of the waters had as yet deprived them. Should even the ground fail them on which they might fight, they were still determined not to abandon the generous struggle; but flying to their settlements in the Indies, establish a new empire in those remote regions, and transport, even into the climates of slavery, that liberty, which could no where find a residence in Europe. Already had they begun to concert the means of accomplishing this extraordinary purpose: and found, that the ships contained in their harbours, could convey above two hundred thousand inhabitants to the East-Indies.

The combined princes, perceiving that they were likely to meet with a vigorous opposition, endeavoured to debauch
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the prince of Orange by the most tempting offers. The sovereignty of Holland was promised him ; and the assistance of England and France, to secure him, as well against the attacks of foreign enemies, as the insurrection of his own subjects. But all proposals were rejected with a noble disdain ; and the prince professed his intention to withdraw into Germany, and to pass his time in hunting on his lands there, rather than desert the cause of his country, or prove unfaithful to the trust committed to him. When Buckingham represented the unavoidable destruction, which threatened the United Provinces, and asked him, whether he did not see, that the commonwealth was already ruined, “ there is one certain way,” said the prince, “ by which I can be sure “ never to see my country’s ruin : I will die “ in the last ditch.”

The people of Holland, had been engaged to espouse the prince’s party, by the hopes, that the king of England, satisfied with his nephew’s promotion, would relinquish those dangerous measures, which he had embraced, and would afford his assistance to the distressed republic. But all these hopes were soon found to be groundless. Charles still adhered to his alliance with France ; and the combined fleets appeared
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on the coast of Holland with an English army on board, commanded by count Schomberg.

Providence, however, for once interposed in defence of virtue and of civil liberty. The fleets were driven to sea by a furious storm, and the rest of the season was so tempestuous, that they never durst make another attempt on the Dutch coasts. Lewis finding that his enemies collected spirit behind their inundations, and that an effectual stop was put to his progress, had left the duke of Luxembourg at Utrecht, and returned with his court to Versailles.

The other states of Europe considered the reduction of Holland as the prelude to their own slavery, and had no hopes of being able to defend themselves, should the power of France, already exorbitant, be still farther increased by such a mighty accession. The emperor, though distant and slow in his motions, began to provide against the common danger: Brandenburg seemed willing to give succour to the States: Spain had supplied them with some auxiliaries; and by the present efforts of the prince of Orange and the hopes of future aid from their allies, the face of affairs began to be already changed.

Groningen was the first place which checked the progress of the enemy: the bishop

bishop of Munster was repulsed from that town, and compelled to abandon the siege with damage and disgrace. The prince of Orange endeavoured to recover Naerden; but Luxembourg falling suddenly on his entrenchments, obliged him to relinquish the undertaking.

Of all the allies whom the Dutch had, there was no one on whom they so much depended as on the English parliament, which the king's necessities at last obliged him to assemble.* The attention of all men, both at home and abroad, was fixed on the proceedings of this session, which met after successive prorogations for near two years. From this circumstance it is evident, how much the king was afraid of convening his parliament; and indeed the measures he had lately embraced were such, as gave but too much cause for their apprehensions.

His majesty, however, addressed them with all the appearance of cordiality and confidence. He said, that he would have convened them sooner, had it not been that he was willing to allow them as much leisure as possible for attending their private affairs, as well as to give his people some respite
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from taxes and impositions: that since their last meeting, he had been obliged to undertake a war, not only just but necessary, necessary both for the honour and interest of the nation: that in order to preserve the public tranquillity, he had published his declaration of indulgence to Dissenters, and had found the happy effects of that measure; that he had heard of some objections which had been made to this exercise of power; but he would tell them plainly, that he was determined to adhere to his declaration, and would be very much displeased with any opposition; that though a report had been propagated, as if the new-levied forces were designed to controul law and property, he considered that insinuation as so absurd, that he intended to increase his army next spring; and that he flattered himself with the agreeable hopes, that they would make proper allowance for this additional charge in their future supplies. The rest of the business, he said, would be explained by the chancellor.

The chancellor expatiated on the same topics, and added many other positions of his own, which, though not more false than those of his majesty, were at least more impudent and bare faced. He asserted that the Dutch were the common enemies to all

monarchies, especially that of England, their only rival in commerce and naval power, and the sole obstacle to their views of an universal empire as extensive as that of ancient Rome; that, even in the midst of their present calamities, they were so possessed with these ambitious projects, that they haughtily rejected all treaty, and refused all suspension of hostilities; that the king, in undertaking this war, had only adhered to those maxims, which had induced the parliament to advise and approve of the last; and he might therefore boldly affirm, "that it was their war;" that the States being the natural and inveterate enemies of England, both by interest and inclination, the parliament had wisely thought it necessary to extirpate them, and had laid it down as an eternal maxim, that *Delenda est Carthago*, this hostile government must by all means be destroyed; and that though the Dutch boasted of having received assurances, that the parliament would grant no supplies to the king, he was persuaded, that this hope, on which they so much depended, would soon appear to be ill founded.

The falsity of these assertions, could only be exceeded by the impudent manner in which they were advanced; and it might naturally
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CHARLES II. III

be expected, that the commons would have warmly resented such a gross insult on their understanding. They determined, however, to pass it over in silent contempt, and to proceed in their deliberations with that calm and steady spirit, which so well becomes that august assembly.

Their first step was to assert their own privileges, and to maintain the freedom of the election of members. Ever since the year 1604, it had been the constant practice for the house, in case of any vacancy, to issue writs for new elections; and the chancellor, who, before that time, had some pretensions to that right, had never afterwards presumed to exercise it. This indeed the commons considered as the chief barrier of their privileges; and nothing could be more necessary, in order to prevent the clandestine issuing of writs, and to secure a fair and free representative.

No one but so desperate a minister as Shaftsbury, who had formed a regular plan for enslaving the people, could ever have thought of violating a custom so reasonable and so well established, or, had he attempted it, could ever have expected to succeed in the enterprize. Several members had been returned upon irregular writs issued by the chancellor; but the house

had no sooner met, and the speaker taken his seat, than a motion was made against them; and the members themselves had the modesty to retire. Their election was voted null; and new writs were issued by the speaker in the usual manner.

The next step taken by the commons had a greater appearance of complaisance; but in effect was dictated by the same spirit of freedom and independence. In order to supply his majesty's extraordinary occasions, as they termed them, they voted an assessment for eighteen months, at the rate of seventy thousand pounds a month, amounting in the whole to twelve hundred and sixty thousand pounds. However unwilling to come to an open rupture with the king, they would not condescend to express the least approbation of the war; and they gave him the hope of this supply, only that they might procure his assent to the correction of some abuses, which they meant to reform.

Of all the public grievances, no one was more dangerous, both on account of the secret motives from which it flowed, and the fatal consequences with which it might be followed, than the declaration of indulgence. A remonstrance was immediately framed against that stretch of prerogative.

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The king supported his measure. The commons insisted on their remonstrance; and alleged, that such a practice, if allowed, would tend to impede the due course of the laws, and alter the legislative power, which had always been supposed to be lodged in the king, and the two houses.

The eyes of all men were fixed on the issue of this extraordinary affair. The king seemed bound in honour to defend his measure; and in order to prevent all objections, he had positively declared, that he would adhere to it. The commons were obliged to persevere not only for the present security of the nation, which seemed to be in imminent danger, but also because, if the king carried his point, the constitution of the government was, in effect, overturned.

Happily for the nation the king's ambition was more than counter-balanced by his indolence. However desirous of establishing an arbitrary government, he had not the courage to carry his scheme into execution. He no sooner approached the point, which behoved to determine the controversy, than his heart recoiled from the danger and difficulty attending a final experiment; and rather than hazard his crown and life, or even his ease and tranquillity, he was willing to submit to any concessions.

He therefore resolved to recall the declaration; and that he might yield with a better grace, he asked the opinion of the house of peers, who advised him to grant the demand of the commons. He accordingly sent for the declaration, and with his own hand broke the seals. The commons returned the most grateful acknowledgments for this condescension, and expressed the most sincere attachment to his majesty. The king declared, that he would willingly pass any laws which they might deem necessary for the redress of their grievances.

Shaftsbury, who was possessed of greater vigour and resolution than the king, had fondly imagined, that he would firmly adhere to his declaration, and would set at defiance the remonstrances of the commons; but as he saw him abandon at once so capital a point, he presently concluded, that he was utterly incapable of accomplishing such difficult and dangerous enterprizes. The parliament, he was sensible, might carry their scrutiny into those measures which were so obnoxious; and the king from the same love of ease and tranquillity, might give up his ministers to their vengeance. He determined, therefore, to consult his safety by a timely change, and to espouse the interests of
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that party, which was likely to gain the ascendant.

Never turn was more instantaneous or less calculated to save appearances. In a moment he engaged in all the cabals of the country party, and disclosed to them, perhaps exaggerated, the arbitrary designs of the court, in which himself had been so deeply concerned. He was readily received by that party, who were glad of procuring so able a leader; and no difficulty was made with regard to his late apostacy. The violent factions which had prevailed in the nation, and the many sudden revolutions which had lately happened, had tended extremely to corrupt the minds of men, and to deprive them of all sense of honour and decorum,

But the recall of the indulgence was not sufficient to satisfy the commons, nor remove those suspicions which they had conceived of the arbitrary designs of the court. They were determined to secure their religion by another act. They passed a law for imposing a test on all those who should enjoy any public employment. Besides taking the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, and receiving the sacrament in the established church; they were obliged to renounce
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all faith in the doctrine of transubstantiation.

As the Dissenters had assisted the endeavours of the commons against the king's declaration of indulgence, and professed their resolution to accept of no toleration in an illegal manner, they had recommended themselves extremely to the favour of the parliament; and a scheme was formed for uniting the whole Protestant interest against the common enemy, who now began to appear formidable. A bill passed the lower house for the benefit of the protestant Non-conformists; but met with some difficulties in the house of peers.

The vote for supply was carried into a law, as a reward to the king for his ready compliance. A general pardon likewise and indemnity was passed, which secured the ministers from all farther scrutiny. The parliament probably imagined, that the best way to reclaim the criminals, was to shew them that they were still within the reach of mercy. Even the remonstrance of grievances, which the commons presented, may be considered as a proof, that their anger was, for the time, mollified. None of the capital points are mentioned, the breach of the triple league, the French alliance, the Dutch war, the shutting up the exchequer.

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The sole grievances complained of are the tax on coals for providing convoys, the exercise of martial law, the quartering and pressing of soldiers; and they requested, that, after the conclusion of the war, the whole army should be disbanded. The king gave them a favourable, though general answer. When all business was ended, the two houses adjourned themselves.

The king, notwithstanding the large concessions which he had made to the commons, was still determined to persevere in his French alliance, and in the Dutch war, and, of consequence, in all those arbitrary designs, for which these fatal measures had been adopted. The money he had received from parliament enabled him to fit out a fleet, of which prince Rupert was declared admiral; for the duke of York was disqualified by the test. Sir Edward Sprague, and the earl of Ossory served under the prince. They were soon joined by the French fleet, commanded by d'Etrées.

The combined fleets directed their course towards the coast of Holland, and found the enemy riding at anchor within the sands at Schonvelt. The circumstances attending this battle are so obscurely related by historians, that it is impossible to give any distinct

tinēt account of it. All that can be affirmed with certainty is, that both sides laid claim to the victory ; and we may thence conclude, that the action was not decisive. The Dutch, being near home, withdrew into their harbours. In a week they had repaired their ships, and sailed out again in quest of the enemy. On the fourth of June they met off Flushing, where they cannonaded one another for some time, without coming to a close engagement, and were separated by a storm before any considerable damage was done on either side.

Prince Rupert was supposed to be averse to the war ; and for that reason was thought not to have pressed so hard on the enemy as his well-known valour might naturally have prompted him. The duke, though he could no longer command, was still possessed of the chief influence in the admiralty ; and from private pique to prince Rupert, he kept the fleet in continual want of necessaries and provision, so that the prince was obliged to return into harbour, in order to be supplied.

He was no sooner in a condition to sail than he immediately put to sea. The fleets met at the mouth of Texel, and fought the last battle, which, during a course of so many years, has happened between these maritime nations.

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The Dutch were commanded in this action, as well as in the two former, by De Ruyter and Tromp, who had been lately reconciled by the mediation of the prince of Orange, and who now retained nothing of their former animosity, except the generous ambition of excelling each other by their feats of bravery. De Ruyter was opposed to prince Rupert, Tromp to Sprague, and Brankert, their rear-admiral, to D'Etrées. It is observable, that in all actions these gallant admirals first mentioned, had still singled out each other, as the only antagonists worthy each other's valour; and no considerable advantage had yet been obtained by either of them. They fought in this battle, as if death or victory had been the only alternative.

D'Etrées and all the French squadron, except rear-admiral Martel, kept at a distance; and Brankert, instead of advancing against them, shot a-head to the assistance of De Ruyter, who was furiously attacked by prince Rupert. Never did the prince display more signal courage and conduct, or acquire more deserved honour. Having cleared himself from the numerous enemies, with which he was every where encompassed, and having joined his rear-admiral, Sir John Chichely, who had been separated from him

him, he bore down to the assistance of Sprague, who was almost overpowered by Tromp and his squadron. The Royal Prince, in which Sprague first engaged, was so shattered, that he was obliged to remove his flag on board the St. George; while Tromp, for the same reason, was forced to quit his ship the Golden Lion, and go on board the Comet.

The fight was renewed with redoubled fury by these gallant rivals, and by their rear-admirals, their worthy seconds. Sprague was preparing to board Tromp when he observed the St. George terribly shattered, and almost unfit for action. Sprague was leaving her, in order to hoist his flag on board of a third ship, and return to the charge, but a shot, which passed through the St. George, struck his boat, and sunk her. The admiral was drowned to the great sorrow of Tromp himself, who bestowed on his valour the merited applause.

Such was the situation of affairs, when prince Rupert arrived, who renewed the fight with fresh fury. The battle became more obstinate and bloody than ever. The prince threw the enemy into great confusion; and to encrease it the farther, he sent among them two fire ships; making, at the same time, a signal to the French to bear down

down, which if they had done, they would probably have obtained a complete victory. But the prince, perceiving that they neglected his signal, and finding that most of his ships were disabled from fighting, wisely provided for their safety by hauling off towards the English coast, and leaving the victory undecided.

The affairs of the Dutch were in a better situation by land. The prince of Orange had besieged and retaken Naerden; and this success was considered as an omen of still more considerable advantages. Montecuculi, who conducted the Imperialists on the upper Rhine, eluded, by the most artful contrivances, the vigilance and penetration of Turenne, and making a sudden turn, invested the city of Bonne.

The prince of Orange acquitted himself with no less ability; while he baffled all the attempts of the French generals, and leaving them behind him, joined his forces to the Imperialists. The combined armies reduced Bonne in a few days; they took several other places in the electorate of Cologne; and the communication between France and the United Provinces, being thus cut off, Lewis was obliged to recall his forces, and to relinquish all his conquests, except Maef-

tricht, with greater rapidity than he had at first made them.

The king of Sweden having offered his mediation, a congress was opened at Cologne; but the two monarchs insisted on such severe terms, as would have reduced the Dutch to absolute slavery. In proportion as the affairs of the States assumed a more favourable aspect, the kings sunk in their demands; but the States still sunk lower in their offers; and there was little probability of the parties ever coming to any agreement. After the French had recalled their forces, the conferences broke up; and the seizure of prince William of Furstenburg by the Imperialists furnished the French and English with a plausible pretext for leaving Cologne. The Dutch ambassadors in their memorials discovered all that noble contempt and indignation, so natural to a free state, which had met with such cruel and unworthy treatment.

The English parliament assembled on the twentieth of October, and betrayed much stronger symptoms of ill humour, than what had appeared in their last meeting. They had heard of a treaty of marriage between the duke of York and the archduchess of Inspruc, a Catholic of the Austrian family; and they had expressed no dis-

dissatisfaction. But when that treaty miscarried, and the duke made his addresses to a princess of the house of Modena, then in close alliance with France; they immediately took the alarm, and they protested with the utmost zeal against the proposed marriage. The king told them, that their opposition came too late; and that the marriage was already concluded, and even solemnized by proxy. The commons still insisted on their remonstrance; and proceeding to the scrutiny of some other parts of the government, they voted the standing army a grievance, and declared, that they would grant no more supply, unless it could be shown, that the Dutch were so obstinate as to reject all equitable terms.

To put an end to these vigorous attacks, the king determined to prorogue the parliament; and coming suddenly to the house of peers, he sent the usher to summon the commons. The speaker and the usher happened almost to meet at the door of the house; but the speaker being within, some of the members shut the door, and cried, "To the chair, to the chair," while others answered, "the black rod is at the door." The speaker was pushed into the chair; and the following motions were suddenly made: that the alliance with France is a

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grievance; that the evil counsellors are a grievance; that the duke of Lauderdale is a grievance, and unworthy of any trust or employment. There was a general cry, "to the question, to the question:" but the usher continuing to knock at the door, the speaker leaped from the chair, and the house rose in the utmost disorder.

The king, in a very short speech, represented the advantages of unanimity; and the great joy which the enemy would receive from any appearance of dissension between him and his parliament: he assured them that he would employ his utmost endeavours in preventing the growth of Popery; and prorogued them to the seventh day of January.

During the interval, Shaftsbury, whose revolt from the cabal was now universally known, was deprived of the office of chancellor; and Sir Heneage Finch was created keeper of the great seal. Clifford being disqualified by the test, the white staff was bestowed upon Sir Thomas Osborne, a minister of ability, who was afterwards advanced to the earldom of Danby. Clifford withdrew into the country, and soon after died. About this time, the princess of Modena arriving in England with her mother,

ther, her marriage with the duke of York was consummated at Dover.

On the seventh day of January, * the parliament met according to prorogation; and the king endeavoured to soften their resentment by some acts of a popular nature. But all his endeavours were ineffectual: the disgust of the commons was too deeply rooted to be removed by these expedients. They presented a petition to the king, desiring he would appoint a general fast; thereby intimating that the nation was in a very calamitous situation: they remonstrated against the king's guards, which, they affirmed, were dangerous to liberty, and were unconstitutional, as they had not yet received the sanction of parliament: they made some attempts towards imposing a new and more rigorous test against Popery: and what filled the court with the greatest apprehensions, they instantly attacked the members of the cabal, to whose pernicious advice they justly ascribed all the public grievances.

Clifford was dead; Shaftsbury had deserted the court, and engaged in the country party. Buckingham was endeavouring to follow his example, but his intentions as

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yet were known to very few. A motion was therefore made in the house of commons for preferring an impeachment against him: he begged to be heard at the bar; but his apology was by no means satisfactory.

He was required to give a distinct answer to the following questions, which were proposed to him: whether any person had given him any ill advice against the liberties and privileges of the house of commons, or tending to alter the constitution? who were the persons, and what was their advice? What he meant by the expression he used in his apology, that he had got nothing; while others had got three, four, or five hundred thousand pounds; who were the persons, that had got these sums, and by what means had they got them? By whose advice was the army raised, and the command bestowed upon count Schomberg? By whose advice was the army brought up to awe the debates and resolutions of the house of commons? Who made the triple alliance? Who made the first treaty with France, by which that alliance was broken? By whose advice was the exchequer shut, and a stop put to the usual payments? Who advised the declaration of indulgence? Who advised the attacking the Smyrna-fleet before the declaration of the war? By whose
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advice was the war begun during a prorogation of parliament, and that prorogation so long continued? By whose counsel was the parliament prorogued on the fourth of November last?

Buckingham's replies to all these questions were as confused and perplexed as was his apology. He endeavoured to vindicate himself, and to load Arlington. He failed in the former intention; he succeeded in the latter. The commons presented an address for his removal. But Arlington, who was extremely unpopular on many other accounts, was likewise attacked. Articles of impeachment were drawn up against him; though the accusation was never prosecuted.

The king, finding it impossible to maintain a war which was so disagreeable to the parliament, began to hearken to the proposals which the States-general had made him for a separate peace. They wrote a very submissive letter, to be delivered by the marquis de Fresno, the Spanish ambassador at London, whom they empowered to conclude a treaty with him in their name, on certain conditions, which were particularly mentioned.

Charles, in order to gratify the parliament, was pleased to acquaint them with these proposals; and he asked their advice in the present emergence. They advised him

him to put an end to the war: the conferences were begun with the marquis de Fresno; and in fifteen days the treaty was concluded. It was a renewal of the peace of Breda, with these additions, that the Dutch should yield the honour of the flag to the English in the most extensive terms; and pay about three hundred thousand pounds to Charles, towards defraying the expences of the war.

Though the parliament thanked the king for this peace, which was extremely agreeable to the nation, they still proceeded in the redress of grievances. They requested the king to disband his land forces and guards: they named a committee to examine the militia-law, passed in the Scottish parliament, authorizing the army of that kingdom to march into any part of his majesty's dominions by an order of their council: they appointed another committee to enquire into the state of Ireland, with regard to religion, the regular troops, and the militia: they framed one bill for explaining and maintaining the privileges of the habeas corpus; and introduced another, obliging the members of both houses to take the test.

The king imagined, that, by the conclusion of the peace, he had appeased, for the

the time, the resentment of the commons; and he was therefore greatly chagrined at these vigorous proceedings. He took care, however, to render them ineffectual by an immediate prorogation; and having thus delivered himself from all foreign and domestic disputes, he relapsed into a life of ease, indolence, and pleasure.

It was natural to think, that the French king would be highly incensed at the desertion of his ally: but, instead of expressing the least resentment, he readily accepted the mediation of Charles, from whom he had reason to hope for favour and indulgence, considering, that, at this time, he gratified the English monarch with an annual pension of one hundred thousand pounds.

Besides, the success of the campaign had not answered the sanguine hopes of Lewis; and his enemies had been able to form a strong combination against him. The prince of Orange, with a superior army, had marched into Flanders against the prince of Condé, and had proposed to invade the French dominions on that side, where the frontier was, at this time, very defenceless. After long endeavouring, though in vain, to force the prince of Condé to a battle, he rashly exposed a wing of his army at Seneffe; and the French general did

did not fail to seize and improve the advantage,

But this oversight of the prince of Orange was amply repaired by his courage and conduct in the bloody action which ensued. He rallied his broken forces: he led them back to the charge: he attacked with undaunted bravery the veteran troops of France: and he obliged the prince of Condé, notwithstanding his age and character, to exert greater efforts, and to hazard his person more, than ever he had done in any other action, even during the vigour of youth. After sun-set, the battle was maintained by the light of the moon; and it was darkness at last, not the weariness of the soldiers, which put an end to the combat, and left the victory undecided. "The prince of Orange," said Condé, with great candour, "has acted in every thing like an old general, except in exposing his life too like a young soldier."

Oudenarde was afterwards besieged by the prince of Orange; but he was persuaded by the Imperial and Spanish generals to abandon the enterprize on the approach of the enemy. He afterwards invested and reduced Grave; and at the beginning

ginning of winter the armies broke up and went into quarters.

The allies were not equally successful in other places. Lewis in a few weeks reconquered Franche-comté. In Alsace, Turenne was able, with a much inferior force, to baffle all the attempts of the allied army. By a sudden and unexpected march, he attacked and defeated at Sintzheim the duke of Lorraine and Caprara, general of the Imperialists. Seventy thousand Germans invaded Alsace, and took up their quarters in that province. Turenne, who had withdrawn into Lorraine, returned suddenly upon them. He attacked and routed a body of the enemy at Mulhausen. He drove from Colmar the elector of Brandenburg, who headed the German troops. He obtained a new victory at Turkheim: and having cleared the province entirely of the allies, he compelled them to repass the Rhine with great loss and dishonour.

The king of England, in order to give the greater weight to his new councils, had invited Sir William Temple from his retreat, and appointed him ambassador to the States-General. That worthy patriot, considering his sudden recall from his former embassy, and the fatal change of councils, to which it was owing, determined, before he embarked

barked anew, to discover, if possible, the real intentions of the king with regard to those popular measures, which he seemed once more to have embraced.

After condemning the pernicious projects of the cabal, which the king was willing to excuse, he told his majesty, with equal sincerity and boldness, that he would find it extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to establish in England the same form of government and religion which prevailed in France: that the whole nation entertained the most violent antipathy to both; nor could the genius and sentiments of a people be changed but by the most slow and imperceptible degrees: that many, who at bottom were perfectly indifferent with regard to religion, would yet be averse to all innovations on that head; because they justly considered the Protestant religion as the chief support of civil liberty, and the Catholic religion as the certain forerunner of civil slavery: that in France every circumstance had long been adapted to that form of government, and contributed to its security and support: that the commonalty, being poor and dispirited, were little regarded; the nobility, allured by the hope or possession of lucrative offices, civil and military, were wholly devoted to the court; the clergy, influenced by like motives,

motives, added the sanction of religion to the principles of civil policy : that in England a great part of the landed property was in the hands of the yeomanry or middling gentry ; few offices were in the disposal of the crown ; nor could the king himself so much as subsist, far less maintain an army, without the voluntary supplies of his parliament : that if he had an army on foot, yet, if consisting of Englishmen, they would never be persuaded to contribute to measures, so odious to the whole people : that the Roman Catholics in England composed not the hundredth part of the nation, and in Scotland not the two hundredth ; and it seemed a most absurd imagination to expect, by one part, to govern ninety-nine, who were of contrary sentiments and dispositions : that foreign troops, if few, would serve only to create jealousy and disgust ; if many, would certainly produce a general combination of the whole kingdom against the measures of his majesty : and that, in any event, it was difficult to conceive, how a foreign army could be raised and transported into England, or, if transported, how it could be maintained and subsisted.

These arguments Temple re-inforced by the sentiments of Gourville, a Frenchman, for whom, he knew, the king had a great

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veneration. "A king of England," said Gourville, "that will be the man of his people, is the greatest king in the world; but if he will be any thing more, he is nothing at all." The king, at first, seemed highly offended at this discourse; but as he had a great command of his temper, he affected at last to be convinced, and taking Temple by the hand, said with an appearance of satisfaction, "And I will be the man of my people."

Temple, when he arrived in Holland, soon found that the scheme of effecting a peace would be a very difficult, if not impossible enterprize. The allies, besides their suspicion of the king's partiality to France, were extremely desirous of continuing the war. Spain had agreed with the Dutch never to conclude a peace, till all things in Flanders were restored to the condition, in which they had been settled by the treaty of the Pyrenées. The emperor had very strong claims on Alsace; and as most of the princes of the empire were engaged in the alliance, it was hoped, that France, by such a combination, would be compelled to submit to such terms as they should think proper to prescribe.

The States indeed, oppressed with heavy taxes, and ruined in their commerce, were ex-

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extremely desirous of peace, and had few or no pretensions of their own to prevent it: but they could not in gratitude, nor even in good policy, desert allies, who, by their friendly assistance, had saved them from destruction. The prince of Orange too, for whose opinion they had great deference, was inflamed with the love of military glory, and was pleased to be at the head of armies, from which such mighty successes were expected. During the campaign he carefully avoided all conference with Temple; and after the troops were put into winter-quarters, he told him, that, till greater impression was made upon France, they had nothing to hope from a negotiation.

During these transactions on the Continent the court of England underwent some changes. Buckingham, who, by his wit and entertaining humour, had long enjoyed the king's favour, was finally disgraced. The chief ministers were Arlington, now lord chamberlain, and Danby the treasurer. These two noblemen were rivals in the king's favour, and exerted their utmost efforts in order to supplant each other. But Danby gained ground daily, and Arlington declined in the same proportion.

Danby was well qualified for his office, and by his industry and application, he

greatly improved the king's revenue. He endeavoured to behave in such a manner as to give offence to no party; and by this moderate conduct, as usually happens, he was able effectually to please none. He was always a professed enemy to the French interest; but never enjoyed authority sufficient to cure the prepossessions of the king and the duke. It was owing to the prevalence of that interest, that the parliament was convened so late this year; lest they should advise his majesty to declare against France in the ensuing campaign. They met not till the thirteenth of April.*

Every proceeding of the commons discovered that spirit of jealousy and discontent, to which the late avowed measures of the king, and his present secret intentions had given such just cause.

They introduced a bill against Popery, and proposed to insert in it many severe clauses for the detection and punishment of priests: they presented a second address against the duke of Lauderdale, and when the king returned an evasive answer, they seemed still resolved to insist on his removal: they projected an impeachment against the earl of Danby; but the proofs, when

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examined, appeared so deficient, that they thought proper to drop the accusation: they applied to the king for recalling his troops from the French service; for ever since the commencement of the war he had assisted Lewis with a body of ten thousand men; and as he only engaged, that they should not be recruited, they appeared to be much dissatisfied with his answer: a bill was framed, declaring it treason to levy money without authority of parliament; another vacating the seats of members who accepted of offices; and another securing the liberty of the subject, and to prevent the transporting men as prisoners to distant islands.

During these attacks of the country party, the courtiers were determined not to be idle. A bill for a new test was introduced into the house of peers by the earl of Lindsey. By this test, all members of either house, and all who enjoyed any office, were obliged to swear, that it was not lawful, upon any pretext whatsoever, to take arms against the king; that they abhorred that traiterous position of taking arms by his authority against his person, or against those commissioned by him; and that they will not at any time endeavour the alteration of the government either in church or state.

No wonder that a bill of so strange and singular a nature should meet with a strong and furious opposition. During seventeen days were the debates continued with great zeal and animosity; and all the reason and learning of both parties were displayed on this remarkable occasion. The question indeed was such as ought entirely to be excluded from all determinations of the legislature; and even among private reasoners, was little better than a dispute about words. The one party could never pretend, that resistance ought ever to become a familiar practice: the other would surely allow it to be necessary in great extremities: and thus the difference could only relate to the degrees of danger or oppression, which could warrant this violent remedy; a difference, which, in a general question, it was absolutely impossible precisely to determine.

The bill, notwithstanding the great influence of the court, was only carried by two voices in the house of peers. All the popish lords, headed by the earl of Bristol, voted against it. It was sent down to the house of commons, where it was likely to meet with still stronger opposition.

But a dispute, which happened between the two houses, prevented the passing of this and of every other bill, formed during the present

present session. One Dr. Shirley, being cast in a law-suit in chancery by Sir John Fag, a member of the house of commons, preferred an appeal to the house of peers.

The lords took the matter into cognizance, and cited Fag to appear before them. He laid his complaint before the lower house, who undertook his defence. They not only alledged, that no member of their house can be cited before the peers; and for this claim they could produce precedents: they also affirmed, that the upper house could receive no appeals from any court of equity; a limitation, which encroached greatly on the jurisdiction of the peers, and which was directly opposite to the prevailing practice for above half a century.

The commons imprisoned Shirley: the lords maintained their powers. Conferences were held on the subject, but without coming to any agreement. Four lawyers were committed to the tower by the commons, for disobeying the orders of the house, and pleading in this cause before the peers. The peers declared this commitment a breach of the *Magna Charta*, and ordered the lieutenant of the tower to release the prisoners: he refused compliance: they petitioned the king, and desired him to punish the lieutenant for his contempt.

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The king summoned both houses before him; exhorted them to unanimity and concord; and told them, that the present quarrel had been fomented by the arts and intrigues of his and their enemies, who hoped by that means to procure a dissolution of parliament. His advice had no effect. The commons continued as obstinate as ever; and the king perceiving that no business could be transacted, at last prorogued the parliament.

The parliament re-assembled on the thirteenth of October; and still discovered the same violent spirit, by which they had formerly been actuated. The king requested a supply, as well for the building of ships, as for discharging the debts, which lay upon his revenue. He even acknowledged, that he had not been so good an œconomist as he might have been, and as he intended to be for the future; though he affirmed, that, to his great satisfaction, he had found his expences to be far more moderate than had commonly been supposed.

The subject of supply was brought upon the carpet. The commons voted three hundred thousand pounds for repairing the navy; but they appropriated the sum by very strict clauses. They refused, however, to grant any supply for clearing off the anticipations
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of the revenue. This last vote was carried in a very full house by a majority of four only; so nearly were the parties equalled.

The dispute, occasioned by the cause of Dr. Shirley, was again revived. The commons were as resolute and determined as ever in maintaining their privileges. A proposal was made in the house of peers, but over-ruled, for requesting the king to dissolve the parliament. The king was content to prorogue them to the twenty-second of November.

About this time, there happened an affair, which, though of little consequence in itself, serves strongly to mark the character of the nation and the spirit of Charles's administration. The freedom of the government, and the number as well as animosity of the parties, had produced a propensity for political disputes; and as the coffee-houses were the chief scenes, where the measures of the king and his ministers were examined with the greatest severity, a proclamation was published to suppress these places of rendezvous, for which the nation had long entertained a particular fondness.

Such an act of power, about seventy years before, would have been grounded entirely on the prerogative; and no difficulty would have

have been made in submitting to that stretch of authority. But Charles, hearing that some exceptions were taken to his proclamation, applied to the judges, who furnished him with a quirk of law, and that too a very ridiculous one, by which he might vindicate his conduct.

The act which established the excise, invested the king with a power to refuse licences for retailing liquors to such as could not give security for payment of the duties. But coffee was not an exciseable liquor; and even this power of refusing licences was very confined, and could not justly be stretched beyond the intention of the act. The king, therefore, afraid of inflaming the resentment of the people, complied with a petition of the coffee-men, who engaged for the future to prevent all seditious discourse in their houses; and the proclamation was recalled.

This campaign proved more fortunate to the allies than any other during the whole war. Lewis himself took the field, as volunteer in the army commanded by the prince of Condé in Flanders; but all his motions were so narrowly watched by the prince of Orange, that he could gain no advantages on that side, except the taking of Huy
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and Limbourg, places of no great consequence.

Turenne was opposed, on the Upper Rhine, to his great rival, Montecuculi, general of the Imperialists. The intention of the latter was to cross the Rhine, to advance into Alsace, Lorraine, or Burgundy, and to take up his quarters in these provinces: the aim of the former was to secure the French frontiers, and to baffle all the attempts of the enemy. The most masterly conduct was displayed by both these consummate commanders; at length Turenne reduced the enemy to the necessity of decamping in a few days at a great disadvantage; but before he could reap the fruits of his ingenuity, he was killed by a random-shot, which struck him on the breast, as he was taking a view of the Imperialists.

The death of this great general overwhelmed the French with grief and despair. The soldiers, who a little before, believed themselves invincible, now lost all hopes of victory; and the Germans, who would have been glad to compound for a safe retreat, expected nothing less than the total destruction of the enemy.

But De Lorges, nephew to Turenne, who succeeded to the command, possessed a great share of the military genius of his uncle;

uncle; and by his skilful conduct he was able to repass the Rhine, without any considerable loss; though the safety of the army was in a great measure owing to the bravery of the English auxillaries, who were placed in the rear, and who repulsed the enemy with undaunted courage. The duke of Marlborough ~~and~~ captain Churchill, here imbibed the first rudiments of that art, which he afterwards employed against France with such glorious success.

The prince of Condé, leaving the army in Flanders under the command of Luxembourg, marched with a considerable reinforcement to the army of Turenne, whom he succeeded in command. He protected Alsace against the Germans, who had crossed the Rhine, and over-run that province. He compelled them to abandon the siege, first of Hagenau, then of Saberne. He baffled all their endeavours to bring him to a battle: and having dexterously prevented them from establishing themselves in Alsace, he obliged them, notwithstanding their great superiority of number, to repass the Rhine and take up their winter-quarters in their own country.

After the death of Turenne, a detachment of the German army undertook the siege of Treves; and the mareschal Crequi
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advancing with a body of troops to the relief of the place, was totally defeated. He escaped with four attendants, and throwing himself into the town, resolved to defend it to the last extremity. The garrison, however, made the best terms they could obtain, and the mareschal refusing to sign the capitulation, they delivered him as a prisoner into the hands of the enemy.

The Swedes had been induced, by the payment of large subsidies, to declare in favour of the French monarch, and attack the territories of the elector of Brandenburg in Pomerania. That elector, re-inforced by some Imperialists from Silesia, fell upon them with great bravery and success. He soon expelled them out of his part of that country, and chased them into their own. He had an interview with the king of Denmark, who had now espoused the cause of the confederates, and declared war against Sweden. These princes agreed on the means of improving the victory which had lately been obtained.

The only advantage, gained by the French, was at sea. Messina in Sicily having revolted from Spain, a French fleet under the duke de Vivonne was sent to assist the rebels. The Dutch ordered De Ruyter to sail with a squadron to support their

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allies : a battle ensued ; and that great admiral was killed, to the irreparable loss of his country.

The French, who, twelve years before had hardly a ship of war in any of their harbours, had applied themselves with such vigour and industry to the improvement of their navy, that they were now become, in their present force, though not in their resources, the first maritime power in Europe. Their success, however, in this particular, had been chiefly owing to the instructions they had received, and the examples they had followed, in their successive alliances with England and Holland.

The arms of the allies had been very successful during the last campaign ; but the Spaniards and Imperialists imagined that France was not yet sufficiently humbled to submit to fair and equitable terms. Though they could not reject the king's mediation, and Nimeguen, after many difficulties, was at last chosen as the place of congress ; yet under various pretences, they still delayed sending their ambassadors, and no progress was made in the negociation.

Lord Berkley, Sir William Temple, and Sir Lionel Jenkins, were the English ambassadors.

• A. D. 1676.

ambassadors at Nimeguen. The Dutch, who were desirous of peace, soon appeared: Lewis likewise sent his ambassadors: the Swedes, who expected to recover by treaty, what they had lost by arms, were also willing to negotiate: but as these powers could take no steps without the concurrence of their allies, no terms of accommodation could as yet be settled.

It was by the events of war, not the conferences of ambassadors, that the articles of the treaty were to be finally determined. The Spanish towns, ill fortified and worse garrisoned, were unable to resist the arms of Lewis, who by providing magazines during the winter, was in a condition to begin the campaign early in the spring, before the horses could find forage in the open country. In the month of April, he besieged Condé, and took it by assault in four days. Having detached the duke of Orleans to invest Bouchaine, a small but important fortress, he posted his main army in such a manner, as to prevent the allies from coming to its relief, or hazarding a battle without great disadvantage.

The prince of Orange, notwithstanding the rigour of the season, and the scarcity of provision, attempted to raise the siege; but all his endeavours proved ineffectual,

and the place was obliged to surrender to the enemy. On the Upper Rhine, Philipshourg was reduced by the Imperialists. In Pomerania, the Danes and Brandenburgers obtained such advantages over the Swedes, that they seemed to be in a fair way of dispossessing the latter of all their conquests in Germany.

The congress of Nimeguen was now pretty full, and the ambassadors of the emperor and Spain at last made their appearance. The Dutch had declared, that, if they delayed any longer, they would conclude a separate peace with France. In the conferences and negotiations it soon appeared, that the several parties entertained very different views, and were actuated by very different motives.

The Dutch, oppressed with taxes, and burthened with debts, were extremely desirous of finishing the war. They had themselves no other motive for continuing hostilities, than to establish a good frontier to Flanders; but gratitude to their allies still induced them to try, whether another campaign might not procure a peace, which would be acceptable to all parties. The prince of Orange, prompted by honour, by ambition, and by hatred

to France, exhorted them to persevere in this resolution.

The Spaniards, though unable, by their own force, to protect Flanders, were yet determined to agree to no peace, which should leave it in continual danger of invasions; and while they affected to place their chief dependance on the favour of the states, their real trust and confidence was in the assistance of England. They imagined that the parliament of that kingdom, sensible of the dangerous consequences, which must necessarily attend the accession of Flanders to the French monarchy, would exert their utmost endeavours, in order to defeat the designs of Lewis; and they even hoped, that the king himself, roused by the prospect of so great a danger, would at last open his eyes, and would prefer the safety of his own kingdoms to his fatal prejudices in favour of France.

Charles, indeed, was placed in a situation, which enabled him to act as the arbiter of Europe; and no terms, which he would have proposed, could have been safely rejected by either party. But this advantage, which he might have improved, as well for the advancement of his own interest, as for the general benefit of Europe, he was at present tempted entirely to neglect by mo-

tives of a different and contrary nature. On the one hand, his attachment to France prevented him from defending the cause of the allies: on the other, the fear of incensing his subjects, deterred him from declaring in favour of Lewis: terms advantageous to the confederates would deprive him of the friendship of the French king; articles favourable to that monarch would expose him to the resentment of his people and parliament: and between these opposite views and motives, which were sufficient exactly to ballance each other, he was utterly incapable of fixing a choice.

On the fifteenth of February * the parliament assembled; and the king addressed them in a plausible speech; where he earnestly cautioned them against any dissensions; expressed his desire of promoting unanimity; and offered his consent to any laws which they might deem necessary for the good of the public. He informed them of the bad condition of the navy; required a supply for repairing the ships; reminded them, that part of his revenue, the additional excise, was soon to expire; and he subjoined these words, " You may at any
 " time see the yearly established expence of
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A. D. 1677.

“ the government, by which it will appear, that, the constant and necessary charge being paid, there will be left no overplus, towards supplying those contingencies, which may happen in all kingdoms, and which have lain very heavy on me this last year.”

The proceedings of the parliament were like to have been interrupted by a declaration against the legality of their meeting. It had been enacted by an old law of Edward the third, “ That parliaments should be summoned once every year, or oftner, if need be.” The last prorogation had been longer than a year: and being esteemed on that account illegal, it was supposed to be equal to an entire dissolution. The inference seems rather to be forced; and besides, a latter act, that which repealed the triennial law, had decreed, that it was necessary to assemble parliaments only once in three years.

So much stress, however, was laid on this objection, that Buckingham, Shaftsbury, Salisbury, and Wharton, maintained with great zeal in the house of peers the illegality of the parliament, and the invalidity of all its future decisions. As a punishment for this opposition, they were committed to the tower, there to continue during the plea-

pleasure of his majesty and the house. Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton, asked pardon for their fault, and were soon after dismissed. But Shaftsbury, more obstinate in his temper, and desirous of acquiring the favour of the people, applied for remedy to the laws; but being condemned by the judges, he was confined for the space of twelve months; and then upon making the same submissions, he was likewise dismissed.*

The parliament at first discovered a very peaceable and quiet disposition. They granted the sum of five hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds for building thirty ships; but they strictly appropriated the money to that particular purpose. Estimates were delivered of the expence; but it afterwards appeared, that it exceeded the grant by almost one fifth. They likewise gratified the king with the continuance of the additional excise for three years: and every thing

* The earl of Shaftsbury, it seems, had reflected on the duke of Buckingham, as a man inconstant and giddy in his conduct. As the duke was taking coach, on his discharge from the tower: the earl, looking out of his window, cried, "What, my lord, are you going to leave us?" "Aye, my lord," replied the duke, "such giddy-headed fellows as I, can never stay long in a place." *Eccbard, Tom. 3. p. 416.*

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thing seemed to promise a good understanding between the king and the parliament.

But the commons were soon alarmed by the events which happened on the continent. Lewis had taken the field in the beginning of the month of February, and invested Valenciennes, which he took in a few days by assault. He next laid siege to Cambray and St. Omer. In order to prevent his progress, the prince assembled an army, and advanced to the relief of St. Omer. The duke of Orleans and marefchal Luxembourg were detached against him.

The prince, though an excellent general, was inferior to those consummate commanders who were here opposed to him by Lewis. By an artful movement of Luxembourg, he was surprised and defeated, and obliged to retreat to Ypres. During the battle, however, he displayed the most undaunted courage: one of the fugitives he struck on the face with his sword: "rascal," said he, "I will set a mark upon you at present, that I may hang you afterwards." Cambray and St. Omer were soon reduced by Lewis.

The progress of the French monarch filled the parliament with the most just apprehensions. They drew up an address to the king, representing the danger which threatened the kingdom from the exorbitant power

er of France, and desiring, that his majesty, by such measures as he should judge proper, would provide for the security of his own dominions, and the Spanish Netherlands, and thereby remove the fears of his people.

The king replied in general terms, that he would take every step for the preservation of Flanders, consistent with the peace and tranquillity of his kingdoms. This answer was considered as an evasion, or rather a flat refusal. The commons, therefore, resolved to be more particular. They begged, that he would not delay to contract such alliances as might be requisite for effecting that purpose; and in case a war with France should be the consequence of his measures, they engaged to furnish him with such supplies, as should be necessary for maintaining the honour and interest of the nation.

The king too thought proper to give a more particular answer. He said, that the only way to prevent the danger, which they so much dreaded, was to enable him to make effectual preparations for their security. This hint was considered as a demand of another supply. The parliament, therefore, empowered the king to borrow on the additional excise two hundred thousand pounds, at seven per cent: a sum, which,
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when joined to the ordinary revenue, they judged sufficient to fit out a fleet, and thereby to put the kingdom in a posture of defence.

The king was not satisfied with this concession. He told them, that, unless they granted him the sum of six hundred thousand pounds, it would be impossible for him, without exposing the nation to manifest danger, to embrace such measures, as would answer the ends of their several addresses.

The parliament took this message into consideration; but before they came to any determination, the king summoned them to Whitehall, where he assured them, upon the word of a king, that they should never have cause to repent of any trust, which they should repose in him for the safety of the kingdom; that he would not on any account abuse their confidence, or apply their money to other uses, than they intended it; but that he would not endanger either his own safety or theirs, by embracing any vigorous measures, or contracting new alliances, till he was in a better condition, both to protect his subjects and annoy his enemies.

This speech was very fair and plausible; but the commons considered, that how sincere soever the king might be in his present

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resolutions, he had frequently deceived them in former instances; and they therefore determined to have some better security of his good intentions than his royal word and promise, before they would entrust him with such a large supply.

Accordingly, instead of complying with his majesty's request, they presented an address, in which "they besought him to
" conclude a league, offensive and defensive with the States-general of the United
" Provinces, against the growth and power
" of the French king, and for the preservation of the Spanish Netherlands; and to
" contract such other alliances with the allies as should appear necessary for that
" purpose."

They enforced their advice with various arguments; and promised immediate and plentiful supplies for maintaining the honour of the crown and the safety of the nation. The king seemed to be highly offended at this address, which he considered as a violent encroachment upon his prerogative. He reprimanded the commons in very sharp terms; and ordered them immediately to be adjourned.

It appears, however, from undoubted authority, that, notwithstanding the solemnity of Charles's professions, he had at this time

no other view than that of procuring a sum of money ; and he hoped, that, when his insincerity should be afterwards discovered, he would easily be able to apologize for his conduct.

Meanwhile the negotiations were continued between France and Holland, and an eventual treaty was concluded ; that is, all their differences were compromised, provided they could afterwards give satisfaction to their allies. But this work, though extremely difficult, seemed to be much facilitated by the farther losses of the confederates, and the great impatience of the Hollanders ; when an event happened, which promised a more prosperous issue to the war with France, and an entire change in the English councils.

This was the marriage of the prince of Orange with the lady Mary, eldest daughter to the duke of York, and heir apparent to the crown, (for the duke had no male issue.) She and her sister Anne had been educated in the Protestant religion by the express order of the king ; and the prince of Orange seemed to be well pleased with the prospect of such a match.

The king, however, instead of considering this alliance as a reason for espousing the cause of the allies, imagined, that, by means of it, he should be able to draw over

the prince entirely to his sentiments. A peace he determined to make; such as would satisfy France, and maintain his connexions with that crown; and he resolved to sanctify it by the approbation of the prince, whom he found to be extremely beloved in England, and esteemed throughout all Europe. All the motives for this alliance were enforced by the solicitations of Danby and also of Temple, who had returned to England: and Charles at last gave permission to the prince, when the campaign should be finished, to pay him a visit.

The prince arrived in England, on the tenth of October, and immediately repaired to Newmarket where the court was then kept. The king received his nephew with great cordiality; and would have instantly entered upon business: but the prince desired first to see the lady Mary; declaring, that contrary to the usual manner of persons of his rank, he placed a great part of happiness in domestic satisfaction, and would not, on any consideration of interest or policy espouse a person whom he could not love.

He was accordingly permitted to have an interview with the princess, whom he found in the bloom of youth, and extremely agreeable both in her person and behaviour. The king now imagined that he had a fast hold

hold of his nephew; and might safely demand consent to almost any proposal. But he soon found, that he was deceived in his expectations. The prince refused to enter upon business, or to concert any terms for the general peace, until his marriage should be fully compleated. He was sensible, he said, from the situation of affairs, that his allies were likely to have bad terms; and he would never incur the imputation of having purchased a wife at their expence; nor indeed was he of a humour to barter his honour for any woman in Christendom.

Charles still expected, that, notwithstanding the distant, reserved manner of the prince, he would soon depart from this rigid punctilio; he therefore delayed the conclusion of the marriage, hoping, by his own insinuations and intrigues, as well as by the charms and caresses of the princess, to gain him over to his party. The prince, however, still continued immoveable in his purpose. One day Temple found him in very bad humour, expressing his regret that he had ever come to England, and declaring his intention in a few days to leave it: but, before he went, the king, he said, must determine the footing, on which they were afterwards to live together: he was sure it must either be like the best friends or the great-

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greatest enemies; and he desired Temple to acquaint his majesty with this resolution.

The king was alarmed with the menace of his nephew, and dreaded the consequences of his abrupt departure. He, therefore, resolved to make a virtue of necessity; and having paid a compliment to his nephew's sincerity, he told Temple, that the marriage was finished, and ordered him to inform the duke of it, as of an affair already determined. The duke, who had never been hearty in the project, seemed at first surprized; but he instantly yielded a ready obedience: a maxim, he said, which he constantly observed in whatever he knew to be the king's pleasure. The portion of the princess was fixed at forty thousand pounds: the marriage-articles were immediately drawn: the king declared the match in public council: the city of London expressed the highest joy on the occasion: the mayor entertained the whole court with great magnificence: and the nuptials were solemnized on the fourth day of November.

Immediately after the conclusion of the marriage, the king entered into conferences with the prince concerning the plan of a general pacification, at which Danby and Temple assisted. After some dispute, it was agreed, that Lewis should restore all he had
taken

taken from the emperor and the duke of Lorraine; that there should be a mutual restitution between France and Holland; and that Spain should recover possession of Aeth, Oudenarde, Charleroi, Courtray, Tournay, Condé, Valenciennes, Saint-Guillain, and Binch.

The prince proposed, that Franche-comté should likewise be restored; and Charles imagined, that, because he had patrimonial estates of great value in that province, and deemed his property more secure in the hands of Spain, he was induced by private views to insist on that article; but the prince declared with great magnanimity, that to procure one good town to the Spaniards in Flanders, he would willingly sacrifice all those possessions. As the king still represented the impossibility of compelling Lewis to resign Franche-comté, the prince thought proper to submit. The prince engaged to use his endeavours in persuading the States to agree to these conditions, and Charles undertook to procure the consent of the French monarch. He declared, that he would never recede in the least article from the scheme concerted, but proclaim war against Lewis, if he refused it; and with this assurance, the prince left England.

The earl of Feversham, a creature of the duke's, and a Frenchman by birth, was sent as ambassador to Paris with intimation of this agreement; which, though it must have been extremely disagreeable to Lewis, he received with seeming complacency and contentment. He told Feversham, that the king knew he might always command a peace; but some of the towns in Flanders, it seemed very hard to demand, especially Tournay, upon the fortifications of which he had expended large sums of money: he hoped his brother would not break with him for one or two towns; and even with regard to these, he would send orders to his ambassador at London, to treat with the king himself.

Charles was mollified by the submission of France; and the blow was thus artfully eluded. The French envoy, Barillon, afterwards acknowledged, that he had orders to restore all except Tournay, and even to treat about some equivalent for that fortress, if the king continued to demand it. The prince was gone, who was the soul of the whole project: and the negociation began to draw out into messages and returns from Paris.

The king, however, could sometimes bestir himself, and exert greater vigour and activity.

activity. Piqued at the insincerity of the French court, the meeting of parliament was anticipated to the fifteenth of January; * a very uncommon measure, and such as might justly give alarm to Lewis. Temple was invited to the council, and the king told him that he proposed to send him to Holland, in order to conclude a treaty of alliance with the States; and that the intention of it should be, like the triple league, to compel both France and Spain to agree to the terms concerted.

Temple was sorry to see the king discover such an appearance of neutrality between the parties. He observed, that the best method was to declare in favour of the allies, should France refuse a direct and categorical answer: that this measure would please the prince, the confederates, and the people of England; advantages, which could not be derived from such an alliance with Holland alone: that France would be offended, and Spain also; nor would the Dutch be satisfied with such a faint imitation of the triple league; a measure adopted when they were equally at peace with both parties. These reasons induced Temple to decline the employment; and Laurence Hyde,

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Hyde, second son to chancellor Clarendon, was appointed in his place.

The prince of Orange was surprized to observe such a mixture of vigour and irresolution in the English councils. Though he could not approve the measure, he yet determined to convert it to the interest of his country; and as Spain secretly consented, that her ally should conclude a league, which in appearance was levelled against her, as well as France, but which in reality was intended only against the latter, the States signed the treaty in the terms concerted by the king.

Meanwhile the English parliament met on the twenty-eighth of January, having been further prorogued to that term; and the king expected, from the vigorous measures, which he pretended to have taken, a very quiet and peaceable session. He told them in his speech, that there was little probability of procuring a good peace by conferences and negociations; and that he was therefore determined to undertake a war for that purpose. The parliament, however, were by no means convinced of the sincerity of his professions, and could not help expressing their doubts in the answer which they returned.

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Nevertheless, as they were so far pleased with the Dutch alliance; they voted a fleet of ninety sail, an army of thirty thousand men, and a million of money. Great difficulties were made by the commons with regard to the army, which the house, reasoning from past measures, imagined to be rather designed against the liberties of England than against the progress of the French monarch.

In all debates severe reflections were thrown on the court, and were heard with seeming approbation: the duke and the treasurer began to apprehend impeachments: many motions against the king's ministers were lost by a very small majority: the commons named a day to examine the state of the kingdom with regard to Popery: and they even proceeded so far as to vote, that, how pressing soever the necessity, they would burthen the people with no more taxes, till they had obtained security against the Catholic party.

This last vote gave great offence to his majesty: he upbraided Temple with his popular notions, as he called them; and asked him what dependance could be placed on the parliament for supporting the war, should it be undertaken, when in the very beginning of the session, they discovered such a spirit.

spirit of animosity. Charles, indeed, had been guilty of so many breaches of promise, and afforded such grounds of jealousy to his parliament, that it was hardly possible for him, by any means, entirely to regain their confidence.

The king of France did not fail to improve these distractions to his own advantage. By his emissaries, he represented to the Dutch the little dependance they could have upon England; where an indolent king, averse to all war, especially with France, and indetermined in his measures, was guided entirely by a discontented parliament.

To the aristocratic party, he offered the danger of the prince's alliance with the royal family of England, and awakened their fears, lest, in imitation of his father, who had been honoured with the same alliance, he should endeavour to invade their liberties, and reduce his country to a state of slavery. To enforce these motives by arguments of a stronger nature, he himself took the field early in the spring; and after threatening Luxembourg, Mons, and Namur, he suddenly invested Ghent and Ypres, and in a few weeks reduced both these places.

The Dutch were alarmed by the rapid progress of the French arms; and as they
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were far from being satisfied with the conduct of England, or the ambiguous treaty which had been lately formed, they became still more desirous than ever of a speedy accommodation.

The king had no sooner obtained the supply from parliament, than he immediately began to enlist forces; and such was the ardor of the English for a French war, that an army of above twenty thousand men was in a few weeks raised. The duke of Monmouth, with a body of three thousand men, was sent over to garrison Ostend: some regiments were recalled from the French service: a fleet was equipped with great expedition: and a scheme was formed for concluding a quadruple alliance, between England, Holland, Spain, and the emperor.

But these vigorous measures were suddenly checked by a warm address of the commons. They there justified all their past proceedings, which had given so much offence to his majesty: desired to be informed of the measures he had embraced; and intreated him to discard evil counsellors, particularly the duke of Lauderdale, whom they justly considered as a very dangerous minister. The king said, that their address was so extravagant, that he was unwilling at present to give it the answer it well

deserved; and he began once more to listen to the proposals of the French, who promised him large sums of money, if he would consent to their making an advantageous peace with the allies.

Temple, though importuned by the king, refused to have any concern in so shameful a transaction: but he tells us, there was one article proposed, which enraged the king to such a degree, that he could never forget it so long as he lived. Sir William chose not to be more particular: but the editor of his works, the celebrated doctor Swift, acquaints us, that Lewis, before he would consent to give any money, demanded as a preliminary, that the king should promise never to maintain above eight thousand regular troops in his three kingdoms. When this proposal was made to Charles, "Cod's fish," said he, his usual oath, "and does my brother of France think to serve me thus? are all his promises to make me absolute master of my people come to this? or does he think it a thing to be done with eight thousand men?"

Van Beverning was the Dutch plenipotentiary at Nimeguen: a man of great ability and address. He was extremely desirous of peace, and was convinced, that, considering the indolence and prejudices of
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the king, and the jealousies and discontents of the parliament, there was little hopes of ever receiving any assistance from England. He was ordered to repair to the French king at Ghent, and settle the terms of a general treaty, as well as obtain a present truce for six weeks.

The terms concerted were much worse for the Spaniards than those proposed by the king and the prince of Orange. Six towns, none of them of any great importance, were to be restored to them : but Ypres, Condé, Valenciennes, and Tournay, which formed the chief strength of their frontiers, were to continue in the possession of France.

The people in England were highly displeased, when they heard, that Flanders was to be left in so weak a condition. The chief complaints were directed against the king, who, by his assistance at first, by his connivance afterwards, and by his indolence at last, had contributed to raise the power of France to such an enormous height, that it threatened the general liberties of Europe. Charles, affected with the imputation which was thrown upon him, afraid of incurring the hatred of his subjects, and perhaps provoked at the secret article demanded by France, began to wish heartily

for a war, which, he hoped, would restore him to his ancient popularity.

The insincerity of the French ambassadors furnished him with an opportunity of displaying these new dispositions. While the plenipotentiaries at Nimeguen were adjusting the terms of a general peace, the marquis de Balbaces, the Spanish ambassador, asked the ambassadors of France, at what time Lewis proposed to restore the six towns in Flanders. They told him, that the king, their master, being bound in honour to procure to the Swedes an entire restitution of all they had lost in the war, could not restore these towns, till that crown was fully satisfied; and that this detention of places was the only means to compel the princes of the north to agree to the peace.

The States immediately acquainted the king with an affair, which might be productive of such fatal consequences. The king was filled with anger and indignation. Without delay he sent Temple to Holland, in order to concert an effectual plan for opposing the ambition of France. In six days Temple concluded a treaty, by which Lewis was required to declare within sixteen after the date, whether he would instantly restore the towns; and in case of his refusal, Holland was bound to continue the war,
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and England immediately to join in the confederacy.

The parliament, however, were still so suspicious of the king's intentions, that they voted the army to be instantly disbanded. The king represented the danger of taking such a step before the conclusion of the peace; and he asked them whether he could honourably abandon those towns in Flanders, which had put themselves under his protection, and which at present depended solely on him for their safety. The commons agreed to prolong the term with regard to the garrisons of these towns.

Charles usually spent a great part of his time in the apartments of his mistresses, particularly those of the dutchess of Portsmouth; where, among other gay company, he often conversed with Barillon, the French ambassador. By the insinuations of this man and the importunities of the dutchess, he was induced, in an unguarded hour, to grant an order, which instantly altered the face of affairs in Europe.

One Du Cros, a French fugitive monk, was dispatched to Temple, requiring him to apply to the Swedish ambassador, and prevail with him not to insist on the terms demanded by France, but to sacrifice to the general peace those interests of Sweden.

Du Cros, in consequence of some private instructions he had received from Barillon, talked every where in Holland of the commission he was going to execute ; and all men were filled with surprise and indignation. It was now evident, that Charles was of such a fickle and inconstant temper, that no confidence could be put in his most solemn engagements. The king afterwards, when he met Temple, with a spirit more worthy of a silly buffoon than a great monarch, treated the matter in raillery, and said laughing, that the rogue Du Cros had outwitted them all.

Mean while the negociations at Nimeguen were still carried on ; and the French ambassadors delayed their answer till the morning of the fatal day, which, by the late treaty between England and Holland, was to determine, whether Chrirtendom was suddenly to be blessed with a general peace or involved in all the calamities of a bloody war. The French ambassadors then waited on Van Beverning, and told him, they were willing to agree to the restitution of the towns, and to conclude and sign the peace.

Van Beverning might have demanded a delay, because it was impossible to procure the instant consent and concurrence of Spain :

Spain : but he was so fully convinced of the uncertainty of the English councils, and was so much alarmed by the late commission intrusted to Du Cros, that he judged it for the interest of the republic to conclude, on any reasonable terms, a war, where they were likely to receive so little assistance.

The articles were accordingly drawn, and signed by the ministers of France and Holland late in the evening. By this treaty, France retained possession of Franchecômte, Cambray, Aire, St. Omer, Valenciennes, Tournay, Ypres, Bouchaine, Cassel, &c. and Spain recovered only Chairleroi, Courtray, Oudenarde, Athe, Ghent, and Limbourg.

Next day Temple received, by an express from England, the ratification of the treaty which had lately been formed with the States, with orders immediately to proceed to the exchange of articles. The wind had now shifted, and the weather-cock pointed to a different quarter : Charles had altered his sentiments, and returned to his inclination for war.

Loud complaints were made against Van Beverning by the ambassadors of the allies at Nimeguen, particularly by those of Brandenburg and Denmark, whose masters were bound by the treaty to relinquish all their

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conquests. The ambassadors of Spain and the emperor were dissatisfied; and all men imagined, that the States, encouraged by continual promises and assurances from England, would disavow their ambassadors, and renew the war.

The prince of Orange even took a very extraordinary step to induce them to this measure; or perhaps to express his resentment against Lewis, to whom he bore a particular hatred. The day after the conclusion of the peace, he attacked the enemy at St. Denis near Mons; and obtained some advantage over Luxembourg, who, relying on the faith of the treaty, was totally unprepared for action. The prince knew, at least had reason to believe, that the peace was concluded, though he had not received any formal intimation: but he thought, that no principles of honour required, that he should stand upon punctilios with those, who, without the least provocation, and contrary to every dictate of justice and equity, had invaded and almost ruined his country.

Hyde was dispatched into Holland, in order, if possible, to persuade the States to disavow Van Beverning; and the king engaged, that if he might depend on the Dutch, he would instantly declare war, and would continue it,

it, till France was reduced to reasonable terms. He even proceeded to the performance of his promises. He hastened the embarkation of his troops for Flanders, and all his measures wore a hostile appearance. But the States had seen too many proofs of his insincerity to believe him any longer. They ratified the treaty of Nimeguen; and all the other powers of Europe, notwithstanding their complaints and remonstrances, were at last obliged to submit to the terms prescribed to them by France and Holland.

The king's conduct, for a number of years, had been extremely unpopular: his open alliance at first with France, and afterwards his secret connexion; his dangerous design against the liberty and freedom of his people; his strong attachment to the Catholic faith, and his aversion to the Protestant religion; his disregard of the honour and interest of the nation, and his readiness to sacrifice them to his pleasure; his avarice, or his ambition: these and many other circumstances had exposed the king to the hatred of his subjects, and created incurable jealousies between him and his parliament.

The people of Scotland were no less discontented than those of England. Lauderdale, as the king's commissioner, had long govern-

governed that kingdom with a rod of iron, and exercised every species of tyranny and oppression. By his violent endeavours to support episcopacy, and establish an arbitrary government, he had inflamed the nation to the highest degree of animosity; and lest the cries of the oppressed people should reach the throne, he had obtained an order of the council, forbidding, under the severest penalties, every nobleman or gentleman of landed property to leave the kingdom.

Notwithstanding this edict, Cassilis first, and afterwards Hamilton and Tweddle, repaired to London, and preferred their complaints before his majesty. These violent proceedings of Lauderdale were very opposite to the natural temper of Charles; and he immediately gave orders for treating the people with more lenity and indulgence. But as he was commonly little affected with what lay at a distance, he expressed not the proper resentment against those who had abused his authority.

Even while he retracted those arbitrary measures, which had so much enraged the minds of the people, he was so imprudent as to avow and praise them in a letter, which he sent to the privy council. This mark of approbation might strengthen the
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hands of the ministry ; but the king ran an evident risk of losing the affections of his subjects, which, indeed, he did not deserve to enjoy, by not allowing even those who were desirous of it, to distinguish between him and their oppressors.

It is affirmed, that Charles, after a full hearing of the debates concerning the affairs of Scotland, said, " I perceive that Lauderdale has been guilty of many bad things against the people of Scotland ; but I cannot find, that he has acted any thing contrary to my interest." A sentiment, which shows him to have been altogether unworthy of wearing a crown.

We are now come to the discovery of the famous conspiracy, known in England by the name of the Popish plot ; which forms one of the principal periods of this reign, and has given occasion to many politicians to exercise their talents, some in supporting the truth, others in exposing the falsity of it. This observation is sufficient to demonstrate the impossibility for any historian to please two sorts of men, whose sentiments are diametrically opposite, and who, from an attachment to a particular system, are previously disposed to believe or disbelieve the Popish plot. In vain is an historian impartial if his readers are prejudiced. The course

course of the history obliges us to speak of this famous conspiracy, on which depend all the events of the rest of this reign; and and as we disclaim being of any party but that of truth, we shall confine ourselves to a simple relation of the plot itself, of the arguments advanced either in support of its falshood or reality, and then leave the reader to draw the conclusion.

This plot, true or false, contained three particular designs: to kill the king; to alter the government; to extirpate the Protestant religion, and establish Popery. Most writers, instead of considering these three articles, as branches of one and the same plot, have affected to divide them. Some have chiefly insisted upon the design of killing the king, and slightly glanced at the other two. They thought they were able to demonstrate the falsity of this design, and thence have inferred, that there was no real plot. Others, observing some inconsistencies in the depositions of the witnesses concerning the design of killing the king, have chiefly endeavoured to prove the two last articles; from whence they have concluded that there was a real and true plot.

The reader must be upon his guard against those artifices, which entirely alter the state of the question, and always re-
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member, that the plot consisted not in the single design of killing, or in the single design of subverting the government, or in that of changing religion, but in all these three designs united together, and forming but one and the same conspiracy.

Those, who maintain the reality of the plot, assert, that the king, the duke of York, and some of the ministers were the heads and contrivers of it; and for this assertion they produce many proofs, several of which have already appeared in the course of this reign. The opposite party object, that it is a plain contradiction to suppose the king the author of a plot to take away his own life; that conspiracies, indeed, of subjects against their sovereigns have been frequent and common; but to accuse a king of a plot against his subjects, is a thing altogether new and unprecedented.

To these objections, it is answered, that, though the plot contained three articles, the two last only were essential; and of these the king was the head and contriver: that the article of killing the king, though placed first, was only an effect and consequence of the two others: that this was only the attempt of some of the conspirators, who imagined, there was no other way of executing the plot than by advancing the duke
of

of York to the throne, who was less fickle and inconstant and more active and daring than his brother: that therefore there is no contradiction in the supposing the king to be the head and contriver of the two designs, to subvert the government, and change religion; and that the other was concerted by some persons without his knowledge, in order the more effectually to accomplish the plot: that the seeming force of this objection arises from the preposterous conjunction of the three articles, when they ought to be separated, as on other occasions they are separated, when they ought to be conjoined: that with regard to the second objection, that it is impossible for a king to plot against his subjects, it is drawn from the word plot, which is seldom applied to a king; but it is by no means impossible for a king of England, whose power is limited by law, to form a design of subverting the constitution, and establishing an arbitrary and despotic government; as appear from the examples of Edward the second, Richard the second, and the two last princes: and that any man, if he pleases, is at full liberty to refuse such a design the name of a plot; but it will be allowed by every candid and impartial judge to be as wicked and
cri-

criminal as any other design, which is usually distinguished by that appellation.

It is farther to be observed that there are no less than three opinions concerning the reality or falshood of the plot. The first is of those, who believe it true in all its circumstances : the second of those, who think it absolutely false, and invented on purpose to distress the court, and incense the people against the king and the duke of York : the third of those, who admit its reality with regard to the design of rendering the king absolute, and altering religion ; but deny its truth with respect to the design of killing the king ; and who, after maturely considering the arguments on both sides, find it impossible to fix any determined opinion.

By attending to this distinction, the reader will be the better enabled to guard against those prejudices, which he may have contracted from the perusal of other historians, who scruple not to disguise and curtail the facts, to omit entirely such as clash with the system they have adopted, to insist at length and lay great stress upon others ; to insert in their relations many stories admitted by their party, but supported by no authority ; to add numberless insinuations suggested only by their own fancy ; in a word, to take continually for granted what it is their

business to prove. Such an artifice might be easily excused in formal disputations, where it would soon be detected and refuted; but is altogether intolerable in a continued narrative, where the writer, for the present, is entirely free from all contradiction.

On the twelfth day of August, doctor Israel Tongue, a clergyman of London, applied to one Kirby, a chemist, desiring him to inform the king, that there was a design against his life. Next day, as the king was walking in St. James's Park, Kirby discharged his commission, and was desired by his majesty to bring Tongue to him at eight o'clock that evening.

Tongue came at the hour appointed, and delivered to the king a long narrative, containing the particulars of a plot, digested into forty-three articles. The king, having glanced it over superficially, told Tongue, that he was going to Windsor, but would put the paper into the hands of the lord treasurer Danby, on whom he ordered him to wait the next morning. Accordingly on the fourteenth of August, Tongue came to the treasurer, who asked him, whether the paper left with the king was an original, or copy. Tongue replied that it was a copy of a writing, which had been thrust

thrust under his door without his knowledge, but imagined it was done by a certain person, who had often entertained him on subjects of the like nature.

In a few days he returned to the treasurer, and told him, that he knew the man, who had even given him another narrative longer than the former, which he now delivered to the treasurer. The earl, having perused the paper, asked Tongue, whether he knew the two men mentioned in the narrative, as the persons intended to kill the king, and went by the names of Grove and Pickering. Tongue replied, that he did know them; and that, though he was ignorant of the place of their abode, he believed he could easily inform himself of that circumstance.

The treasurer having reported to the king the intelligence which he had received from Tongue, as well as the contents of the two narratives, desired, that a warrant might be issued for arresting Grove and Pickering; and that some other members of the council should be informed of a matter, in which his majesty's life was so nearly concerned. But the king would neither allow the two men to be arrested, nor permit the earl to disclose the secret to any person whatever, nor even to the duke of York.

Some days after, Tongue sent word to the lord treasurer, that he had discovered the lodgings of Grove and Pickering ; and that they soon intended to set out for Windsor, in order to execute their bloody purpose. The journey, however, did not take place ; and Tongue pretended, that the delay was occasioned by an accident, which had happened to one of their horses.

From this circumstance, and the mysterious manner of communicating the intelligence, the king concluded that the whole was a fiction ; and renewed his injunctions to Danby to keep the matter a profound secret. “ I shall alarm the whole kingdom,” said he, “ and put thoughts of killing me “ into people’s heads, who never had such “ thoughts before.”

Tongue came next to the treasurer and told him, that a packet of letters, wrote by Jesuits concerned in the plot, was that night to be put into the post-house for Windsor, directed to Bedingfield, a Jesuit, confessor to the duke. The packet arrived accordingly, and Bedingfield, after reading the letters, carried them to the duke, adding, that he suspected some bad design upon him ; that the letters seemed to contain matter of a dangerous import, and that he knew them not to be the hand-writing of the

the persons whose names were subscribed to them.

By this incident the king was still farther confirmed in his incredulity ; and he seemed determined to bury the matter in total oblivion. But the duke was so very earnest to have the letters, directed to Beddingfield, examined by the council, that the king at last consented, and allowed the treasurer to communicate the intelligence received from Tongue ; by which means the affair became public.

Kirkby and Tongue were now sent for ; and the latter said, that he received his intelligence from one Titus Oates, who had been bred a clergyman of the church of England, had afterwards embraced the Catholic religion, had lived for some time in the English seminary at St. Omer, had been sent from thence on an errand to Spain, had returned again to the English seminary, had finally abjured the Romish faith, and had lately arrived in his native country.

This man is represented by some writers, as one of the most infamous and abandoned wretches that ever existed ; but as all the crimes of which he is accused, depend entirely on their asseveration, and are not supported by any proof, we think it improper to mention them here, lest they

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should tend to weaken the evidence which he afterwards gave, and which must be tried solely by its own consistence, and by the collateral depositions of other witnesses.

Oates, being summoned before the council, delivered his evidence to the following effect; that in April 1677, he had been employed by Strange, the then provincial, Keins, Fenwick, Harcourt, and other jesuits in London, to carry letters to one father Suiman, an Irish jesuit at Madrid: that in his journey thither he broke open the letters, and found they contained a list of what jesuits they had sent into Scotland, in order to excite a rebellion in that kingdom; together with their sanguine expectations, that their enterprize would be crowned with success, on account of the king's propensity to his pleasures, and the attachment of the duke to the Catholic faith: that he saw several English students at Valadolid, who were obliged by the jesuits of the college to renounce their allegiance to the king of Great Britain: that one Armstrong, in a sermon to the students, presumed to affirm that Charles Stuart, king of England, was not a lawful king, nor the son of Charles the first, but the son of a black Scotchman: that upon his return to England, where he made farther discoveries,
he

he was sent to St. Omer, with another treasonable letter, wrote by Strange, and several other jesuits, in which the design of stabbing or poisoning the king was expressly mentioned: that in order to encourage the English jesuits in the prosecution of the plot, father La Chaise, confessor to the French king, had presented them with the sum of ten thousand pounds, which was now in the hands of one Worlly, a goldsmith in London; and that he himself had carried a letter of thanks to father La Chaise for this favour: that, during his journey, he had seen and read many other letters, all tending to the same purpose of killing the king, subverting the government, and restoring the Catholic religion; and that they were so confident of success, as to say, that the king was possessed with such a strong opinion of their fidelity, that, if any of their number should presume to betray them, he would not give credit to their information: that in April 1678, he (the deponent) came over from St. Omer with more jesuits, to assist at the grand consult, which was held in May by about fifty jesuits at the White-horse-tavern in the Strand, where they concerted and signed their resolution to kill the king: that he soon after returned to St. Omer, and towards the latter end of June
came

came back to England; where he became privy to the treaty with Wakeman, the queen's physician, to poison; and Grove and Pickering to shoot his majesty; and that he heard a jesuit preach a sermon to twelve persons of quality, in disguise; in which he maintained, that Protestant and other heretical princes were *ipso facto* deposed on account of their heresy, and that it was as lawful to destroy them, as an Oliver Cromwell, or any other usurper: that the late wars, and many other mischiefs, were brought about by their means: particularly the dreadful fire in 1666, which was principally managed by Strange, the provincial: that, in that conflagration, their society employed eighty, or eighty-six thousand men, he could not tell which, and expended about seven hundred fire-balls; and notwithstanding their great expence, they gained fourteen thousand pounds by the plunder, among which was a box of jewels, containing a thousand caracts of diamonds: that he was farther informed, that the fire of Southwark in 1676 was occasioned by the like methods; and though in that they were at the expence of a thousand pounds, they got two thousand clear by the bargain.

This deposition appeared so improbable to the king and council, that they determined

mined to take no farther notice of it; and for that reason Tongue and Oates resolved to lay the matter before the parliament. But before they would take this step, Oates thought proper to apply to Sir Edmund-bury Godfrey, a justice of the peace in St. Martin's parish, and to make oath before him, that the paper, which he now put into the justice's hands, contained matters of treason, and other high crimes.

Whether the council were informed of the resolution of Oates, or were afraid of incurring the imputation of negligence in a matter which so nearly concerned the king and the public, they determined to make a more narrow scrutiny into this affair. Accordingly Tongue and Oates were sent for anew, and again examined; and after their examination, lodgings were assigned them in Whitehall, with a guard for their security, and a weekly salary for their subsistence.

The council, it should seem, had received some fresh intelligence from this second examination; for they now sat twice every week in discussing the plot, and imployed Oates, as he was the first discoverer, to seize the persons of the conspirators, and secure their papers. By his means, and upon his depositions, were arrested, Sir George Wake-
man,

man, the queen's physician, Edward Coleman, the duke of York's secretary, Richard Langhorn, Thomas Whitebread, John Gawen, Anthony Turner, William Ireland, William Marshall, William Rumley, James Corker, and Thomas Pickering, of whom the last eight were Romish priests or jesuits.

From the seizure of so many Catholics, the people were inclined to believe, that they were certainly the authors of the plot; and this belief was confirmed beyond all possibility of doubt, by another incident, which happened a few days after. This was the murder of Godfrey, the justice, who had taken Oates's deposition, and who after having been missing for several days, was found dead, in a ditch near Pancras-church, with his sword thrust into his body, his cane and gloves lying by him, rings upon his fingers, and money in his pockets.

The coroner's inquest sat upon the body, and agreeable to the declaration of the surgeons, they gave their verdict, that he was murdered by persons unknown; that his death had proceeded from suffocation and strangling; and that his sword had been stuck into his body after his death, and when he was quite cold, because no signs
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of blood appeared either upon his shirt, his clothes, or the place where he lay.

Though it was possible, that this murder might have been committed by others than Catholics; yet it was universally suspected, that they were the assassins: and that they had been induced to perpetrate this barbarous action, in revenge for Godfrey's having taken the deposition of Oates. This suspicion was afterwards confirmed by undoubted evidence. The king, who was then at Newmarket, was no sooner informed of Godfrey's murder, than he published a proclamation, offering a reward of five hundred pounds, and an assurance of protection to any who should discover the assassins.

Meanwhile the parliament assembled, and the king in his speech told them, that though they had granted money for disbanding the army, he had found Flanders in such weak and defenceless condition, that he had judged it necessary still to keep them on foot, and doubted not but this measure would meet with their approbation. He informed them that his revenue was burthened with large debts, and at best was never sufficient for the constant and necessary expence of the government, as would appear from the state of it; which he proposed

posed soon to submit to their inspection. He likewise took notice of the plot, formed against his life by jesuits; but said, that he would forbear giving any opinion of the matter, lest he should say too much or too little; and that he would leave the discussions of it entirely to the law.

The king had hoped by this precaution, to prevent the parliament from taking cognizance of the plot. But Danby, either afraid of being called to an account, should he conceal an affair of so much importance, which had passed through his hands, or desirous to ingratiate himself with the parliament, in which he had so many enemies, disconcerted all the measures of his majesty; and on the very first day of the session, he opened the matter in the house of lords. The king was highly offended with a step so contrary to his designs, and even to his express orders; and he reprimanded the treasurer with great severity.

The lords were no sooner informed of the plot, than they communicated the intelligence to the commons; and both houses entered so warmly into the matter, that, for several days, they sat from morning till night in examining the evidence. At last they concurred in presenting an address to his majesty, that he would be pleased to appoint

point a general fast; that such papers might be communicated to them as might tend to discover the conspiracy; that all Popish recusants should be removed from London; that the oaths of supremacy and illegiance should be every where administered; that all access should be denied at court to unknown and suspicious persons; and that the trained-bands of London and Westminster should be in constant readiness. The lords Powis, Stafford, Arundel, Peters, and Bellasis were committed to the tower, and were soon after impeached of high-treason. And both houses, after having examined Oates for six or seven hours, voted, “ that the lords and
 “ commons are of opinion, that there hath
 “ been, and still is a damnable and hellish
 “ plot, contrived and carried on by Popish
 “ recusants, for assassinating and murdering
 “ the king, for subverting the government,
 “ and for rooting out and destroying the
 “ Protestant religion.”

If this proves not the plot to be real, it proves at least, that both houses believed it to be so, since there was not the least division in passing this vote. To affirm therefore that the plot was a fiction, it must be said, either that all the members of both houses were grossly mistaken, or that they acted from a spirit of contradiction to the

court, and merely with a view to trouble his majesty. But why should the parliament be actuated by such a spirit, unless they believed that the king was the principal author of the two last parts of the plot.

Even those who have been at most pains to disprove the plot, have yet been obliged, by the force of truth, to acknowledge, that the king, had, almost from the commencement of his reign, concerted a design for altering the government and religion of the kingdom, and that he only wanted courage and address to carry his scheme into execution; nor is it to be doubted, but that all the Roman Catholics would have readily concurred in such an undertaking. A plot, therefore, there certainly was, at least to establish an arbitrary government, and introduce the Catholic religion; nor ought any seeming improbabilities in the depositions of the witnesses, invalidate the truth of this fact, so plainly deducible from every part of the king's conduct.

The evidence of Oates was soon after confirmed by the testimony of another witness. William Bedloe, commonly called captain Bedloe, because he had served some time in the Low-countries, going from London to Bristol, writ to secretary Coventry from Newbury, that he had many secrets to dis-

discover, and therefore desired, that he might be arrested on his arrival at Bristol, and conveyed to London. His desire was granted; and he arrived in London at the very time when the parliament were engaged in the consideration of the plot.

His deposition imported, that Walsh and le Phaire, two Jesuits, concerned in the murder of Godfrey, informed him, that the lord Bellasis had a commission to command forces in the north, the earl of Powis in the south: that the Lord Arundel was empowered by the pope to grant commissions to whomsoever he pleased: that Coleman, the duke's secretary, had been extremely active in concerting the design against the king: that he had received the first intelligence of the plot from the monks of Doway, who, after administering to him four sacraments of secrecy, had dispatched him to Harcourt, a jesuit in London, by whom he had been sent back with fresh instructions to Paris: that Walsh, Phaire, Pritchard, and Lewis, all of them jesuits, had informed him, what lords were to govern, and what men were to be raised; particularly, that forty thousand were to be ready in London, ten thousand were expected from Flanders, and twenty or thirty religious men and pilgrims from St. Jago in Spain: that Hull was to

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have been surprized at the very time when the plot was discovered : that le Phaire, having given him the sacrament of secrecy, told him, that if any conspirators were taken, they were determined to dispatch them before they could be brought to a trial, should they even be obliged to burn the prison in which they were confined : that there was not a Roman Catholic in England of any quality or credit but was privy to the plot, and had received the sacrament from their farther-confessors to be secret and assisting in carrying it into execution : and that the part assigned him, was to carry orders and instructions, and all kinds of intelligence, from one army to another, as he was intimately acquainted with every road and by-path either in England or Wales.

Bedloe's deposition, concurring with that of Oates, excited such a ferment in the nation, that the king was obliged to issue a proclamation, commanding all Popish recusants, under the severest penalties, to repair to their own houses, and not to venture from thence, without a particular licence, to a greater distance than five miles. At the same time another proclamation was published, offering a reward to any one who should discover or apprehend a Romish priest or jesuit; and a bill, which had lately passed

passed the two houses, disabling all Papists from sitting in parliament, received the royal assent.

In other respects, however, the king had not showed so much deference to the voice of the nation. Even since the discovery of the plot, he had been so imprudent as to grant several commissions to Popish recusants ; and it now appeared that these commissions had been counter-signed by Sir Joseph Williamson, secretary of state. For this offence, Williamson, as a member of the lower house, was committed to the tower by the commons.

The king was incensed at this commitment of his servant without his knowledge or concurrence ; and he instantly ordered him to be released. He agreed, however, to recall all the commissions, which had been granted either to real or reputed Papists ; and the commons were satisfied with this concession.

The next object that engrossed the attention of the public was the trial and condemnation of the conspirators. Coleman, the duke's secretary, was the first that was tried. On the twenty-seventh day of November he was brought to the bar of the King's-Bench, before the lord chief justice Scroggs.

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The witnesses produced against him were Oates and Bedloe.

The former deposed, that in 1677, he had been employed by Coleman to carry letters to St. Omer, which he saw opened upon his arrival, and which contained some treasonable expressions, such as calling the king tyrant and the like; as also a letter in Latin to father la Chaise at Paris; in which Coleman returned him thanks for the ten thousand pounds which he had remitted into England for the propagation of the Catholic faith, and assured him, that it should be employed to no other purpose than that for which it was sent, namely, to cut off the king of England; as appeared from the letter of la Chaise, to which this was an answer, and which the deponent likewise saw and read: that Coleman was privy to the design of killing the king; and that when he was informed, in the deponent's hearing, of the resolution taken by Grove and Pickering to shoot his majesty, he readily expressed his approbation: that, in August 1678, Coleman was present at a council of Jesuits and Benedictine monks at the Savoy, for concerting a scheme of raising a rebellion in Ireland; and that, at another time, in Fenwick's chamber, in Drury-lane, he said, he had found a method

thod of transmitting into Ireland two hundred thousand pounds for that purpose : that Coleman knew of the four Irish ruffians who were sent to kill the king at Windsor ; and in Oates's hearing asked father Harcourt, what reward was to be given to those gentlemen who had gone to Windsor ? that the other replied eighty pounds, which the deponent saw lying on the table, most of it in guineas ; and that Coleman was so zealous, that he gave a guinea to the messenger, who was to carry the money, in order to expedite the business : that Coleman was privy to the instructions brought from father Whitebread, by Ashjey, rector of St. Omer, empowering the conspirators to offer ten thousand pounds to Sir George Wake-man, to poison the king, in case Grove and Pickering should fail of the purpose : that Coleman both read and copied these instructions, and transmitted duplicates of them to several others of the conspirators in England, who were employed in different parts of the kingdom, in gathering contributions for the purposes of the plot, and who, by showing these instructions to the Catholic gentlemen, might induce them to give with greater liberality ; as they would thereby be convinced, that the business was likely to be soon accomplished, and that they had reason

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reason to expect assistance from their friends on the Continent: that Coleman was so far from disapproving of the design against his majesty's life, that he said, " he thought the reward offered was too little, and that they ought to add five thousand pounds more, in order to make the business sure:" that in April 1678, the deponent saw Coleman's patent or commission to be secretary of state, granted by Publius de Oliva, general of the society of Jesuits, by virtue of a brief from the pope: that he was perfectly well acquainted with the handwriting of the general; and that in Fenwick's chamber he saw Coleman open the patent, and heard him say, " that it was a good exchange."

Bedloe deposed, that he knew not of any commission to Mr. Coleman; but that Sir Henry Tichbourn had told him, that he brought him a commission to be principal secretary of state, when he brought over the rest of the commissions for the lords and others, from the principal jesuits at Rome, by order of the pope: that in April 1675, he carried over a large packet of letters from Coleman to the English monks concerning the plot: that he had received money to carry on the design to subvert the government of England, " To free the kingdom from damna-

" tion

tion and ignorance, and to deliver all Catholics from the cruel tyranny and oppression of heretics:" that upon the deponent's return with answers to these letters, which were delivered to Coleman by Harcourt, he heard the prisoner, at his house, behind Westminster-Abbey, at the foot of the stair-case, say, " that if he had a hundred lives, and a sea of blood to carry on the cause, he would spend it all to establish the Catholic religion in England; and if there were an hundred heretical kings to be deposed, he would see them all destroyed."

These depositions of Oates and Bedloe, were corroborated by Coleman's own letters. It appears, however, that only those of 1674 and 1675 were found in a drawer under the table. It was commonly thought, that having received notice of his being accused by Oates in the council, he had found leisure to secret or burn the letters of the two last years, with the book in which they were entered.

Be this as it will, the letters seized contained many extraordinary passages. In particular, he wrote to La Chaise, " We have here a mighty work upon our hands, no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that perhaps the
" utter

“ utter subduing of a pestilent heresy, which
 “ has long domineered over a great part of
 “ this northern world. There were never
 “ such hopes of success, since the days of
 “ queen Mary, as in our days. God has
 “ given us a prince,” meaning the duke,
 “ who is become (may I say a miracle) zea-
 “ lous of being the author and instrument
 “ of so glorious a work; but the opposition
 “ we are sure to meet with is also like
 “ to be great: so that it imports us to get
 “ all the assistance we can.”

In another letter, he said, “ I can scarce
 “ believe myself awake, or the thing real,
 “ when I think of a prince in such an age
 “ as we live in, converted to such a de-
 “ gree of zeal and piety, as not to regard
 “ any thing in comparison of God Al-
 “ mighty’s glory, the salvation of his own
 “ soul, and the conversion of our poor
 “ kingdom.” In other passages, he repre-
 sents the interests of England, those of the
 French king, and those of the Catholic re-
 ligion, as intimately connected. The duke
 is also said to be unalterably attached to the
 interests of Lewis. The king himself, he
 asserts, is always disposed to favour the Ca-
 tholics, when he may do it with safety.
 “ Money,” says he in another letter, “ is
 “ able to persuade the king to any thing.
 “ There

“ There is nothing it cannot make him
“ do, were it ever so much to his preju-
“ dice. It hath such an absolute power
“ over him, that he cannot resist it. Lo-
“ gic in our court built upon money has
“ more powerful charms than any other
“ sort of argument.”

He therefore proposes to father La Chaife, that the French king should remit the sum of three hundred thousand pounds, on condition that the parliament be dissolved; a measure, he says, to which the king was sufficiently inclined, were it not for the hopes of procuring a supply from that assembly. The parliament, he said, had already compelled the king to make peace with Holland, contrary to the interests of the Catholic religion, and of his most Christian majesty: and if they should meet again, they would probably oblige him to declare war against France. It is affirmed likewise in the same letters, that the prorogation of the parliament till the thirteenth of April 1675, was owing to the intrigues of the Catholic and French party, who thereby intended to shew the Dutch and other confederates, how little dependance they could have upon England.

Some

Some writers, partial to the Catholic cause, have ventured to assert, that unless so far as it is illegal to be a zealous Catholic, these letters contain nothing criminal nor even worthy of censure; but if this be the general opinion of the Catholics, which we hope for the honour of their religion it is not, the only inference which can be drawn from it is, that no zealous Catholic should be allowed to live in any Protestant state; as the very principles of their religion must engage them to sacrifice the interest and welfare of their country, and indeed every other consideration, to their own narrow and bigotted prejudices.

Coleman acknowledged, that his intention was to make the king and the duke as great as possible; in other words, he owned his being concerned in the two latter parts of the plot, those of subverting the government, and changing the religion of the kingdom. He denied, however, his being privy to the design of killing the king; but as that design was only formed in the course of the present year, and as all his letters since the year 1675 were destroyed, that part of the charge could only be proved by the depositions of the witnesses.

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The jury, composed of gentlemen of the county of Middlesex, against whom Coleman had made no exceptions, immediately withdrawing, in a little time brought him in guilty. Next day he received sentence of death, which was soon after executed upon him in the usual manner.

The same day that Coleman was tried, the king, at the request of the lords, issued a proclamation, offering to any one, who, before the twenty-fifth day of December next, should make any farther discovery of the late horrid design against his majesty's person and government, a reward of two hundred pounds; and, if the informer were a principal in the design, his majesty's most gracious pardon.

Whether from a desire of obtaining this reward, or from a conviction that they had good authority for what they advanced, certain it is, that Grove and Bedloe had the boldness, before the king and council, to accuse the queen herself, of consenting to the death of his majesty, and of being concerned in the design to poison him by means of Wake-man, her physician. But, besides that their depositions contained only some slight presumptions, from which no certain conclusion could be drawn, the king stopped the prosecution of this affair by his express

command; and so highly was he incensed at Oates's insolence, that he ordered a stricter guard to be kept upon him. The commons, however, presented an address, that Oates should be freed from restraint, attended by his own servants, and gratified with a competent allowance for his support.

It was not long before the other criminals were brought to their trial. On the seventeenth of December, were arraigned and tryed at the Old Baily, Ireland and Pickering, both priests; Grove, a lay-brother; Whitebread, provincial of the jesuits; and Fenwick, a member of the same society. But as, in the course of the evidence, their appeared not sufficient proof against the two last, they were reserved for another occasion; and the trial was confined to the three first.

Oates's evidence against them imported, that at the grand consult at the white-horse in the Strand, where Ireland was present, it was determined, that Grove and Pickering, agreeable to their former engagements, should endeavour to execute their design of killing the king; and that Grove being a layman, should have fifteen hundred pounds for his reward; and Pickering, being a priest, thirty thousand masses, which estimating these at a shilling a-piece, amounted

ed to a like value: that Grove and Pickering accepted the terms, and signed the resolution, at Whitebread's lodgings, at Mr. Sander's at Wild-house; where, in a little chapel, they, and about forty or fifty more of the conspirators, heard mass, and received the sacrament, administered by one Barton, a jesuit; and then took an oath of secrecy upon a mass-book, which one Mico held, while Whitebread pronounced the words: that, in pursuance of this resolution, the deponent had often seen Grove and Pickering walk in the park, with screwed pistols: that they had silver bullets champ'd, in order to render the wound incurable; and that he saw Grove's bullets in May, and Pickering's in August: that, before the consult in the month of March, Pickering had a fair opportunity to shoot the king; but the flint of his pistol happening to be loose, he durst not give fire; and because, by his negligence, this opportunity was lost, Pickering underwent penance, and received twenty or thirty strokes of discipline, and Grove was reprimanded for his carelessness, as the deponent had seen in Whitebread's letters: that Grove went about with one Smith to gather Peter pence, either to carry on the design, or to send to Rome; that he saw the book in which it was entered; and heard Grove say, that he had been gathering it.

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Bedloe, the second witness, swore, that he had been employed by the conspirators for the space of five years, in carrying their letters to their confederates beyond seas, and bringing back the answers, all or most of which related to the plot: that he always took care to open and read both the letters and answers, by which means he was fully informed of their contents: that he heard some of the conspirators say, that they would not leave a single heretic alive in England, to tell hereafter, that ever there existed in that kingdom such a religion as the Protestant: that, in August last, at Mr. Harcourt's lodgings, he met the prisoners, Ireland, Grove and Pickering, with some others; where he heard them say, that since the four ruffians had failed in their purpose of killing the king, Grove and Pickering should go on with their design, and should endeavour to assassinate his majesty in his morning-walks at Newmarket: that they were extremely bent on their purpose; and that Grove, more eager than the rest, said, that, if it could not be done privately, it should be attempted openly; and that those, who should fall in such an attempt, would have the glory of dying martyrs; but if they were discovered, the danger could never rise to such a height, but their party would be able to afford them protection:

tion : that Grove was to be rewarded with fifteen hundred pounds, and Pickering with as many masses, as valuing each at a shilling, would amount to the like sum : that at the time, when the conversation turned, in Harcourt's lodgings, upon the design of killing the king, there was likewise another scheme concerted among them for murdering several noblemen, and the particular parts assigned to every assassin ; to wit, that Knight should kill the earl of Shaftsbury ; Pritchard, the duke of Buckingham ; O-neil, the earl of Ossory ; and Obrian, the duke of Ormond.

The defence of the prisoners consisted chiefly in a peremptory denial of the whole charge. Ireland objected against Bedloe's evidence, that, during the month of August, and part of September, when the crimes were said to have been committed, he was not in London, but in Staffordshire and Cheshire, as he offered to prove by twenty witnesses : but both Oates and Bedloe swore the contrary ; and, what may be deemed of more consequence, one Sarah Payne, formerly a servant to Grove, swore, that, about the middle of August, she saw Mr. Ireland at a scrivener's door in Fetter-lane.

With regard to the grand consult said to have been held in April, Ireland, as well as

Whitebread, who was present at the trial, alledged, that it could be proved by a hundred witnesses, that Oates was at St Omer all the months of April and May; and offered to produce a certificate from thence, under the seal of the college. Such certificate, however, was not allowed as evidence by the law of England.

In conclusion, they were all three found guilty, and condemned to be hanged, drawn and quartered. The sentence was soon after executed upon them; though they persisted to the very last in the most solemn protestations of their innocence. It is certain that, in the succeeding reign, Oates was tried and condemned for perjury in this very case: but if the circumstances of the times, when these two trials happened, are seriously considered, it will appear, that there is reason to believe, that prejudice and passion bore a great sway in both.

When the three jesuits were condemned, the whole kingdom was alarmed with the noise of a plot, formed by the Papists, against the king, the government, and the Protestant religion. The two houses of parliament had confirmed the belief of this plot by the unanimity of their votes, and the king had supposed its reality in all his proclamations. It is not therefore improbable,

ble, that the judges and jury might be prejudiced, and, of consequence, inclined to believe whatever Oates and Bedloe deposed.

On the other hand, when Oates was convicted of perjury, the face of affairs was entirely altered. The throne was possessed by a zealous and bigotted Catholic; and it was now dangerous to affirm, that there ever had been such a thing as a Popish plot. The Papists had now the same superiority over the Protestants, which the Protestants had formerly over the Catholics, and the judges were entirely devoted to the king. In a word, it may be sufficient to observe, that Oates was tried before judge Jefferies, a man of the most infamous and abandoned character, who over-awed and intimidated the juries into any verdict he pleased, and who, in almost every other part of his conduct, is condemned even by those very writers, who, either from conviction or prejudice, are inclined to think, that he acted uprightly in the present instance.

While the parliament discovered such an extreme jealousy of the designs of the court, no wonder that some of the principal ministers should feel the weight of their resentment. Danby was the first against whom their vengeance was directed. Montague, the king's ambassador at Paris, had obtained

ed a seat in the lower house; and without the knowledge or consent of the king, he returned suddenly to England.

Charles, suspecting his intention, gave orders for seizing his papers; but Montague, who apprehended some such treatment, had taken care to conceal one paper, which he immediately produced in the house of commons. It was a letter from the treasurer, Danby, to Montague, concerning the base negotiation in which Charles had engaged for selling his neutrality to the French monarch during the war between him and the allies.

It was conceived in the following terms :

“ In case the conditions of peace shall be
 “ accepted, the king expects six millions
 “ of livres for three years, from the time
 “ that this agreement shall be signed be-
 “ tween his majesty and the king of France;
 “ because it will probably be two or three
 “ years before the parliament will be
 “ in a humour to give him any supplies
 “ after the making of any peace with
 “ France; and the ambassador here has al-
 “ ways agreed to that sum, but not for so
 “ long a time. If you find the peace will
 “ not be accepted, you are not to mention
 “ the money at all; and all possible care
 “ must be taken to keep this whole negoci-
 “ ation

“ation as private as possible, for fear of
 “giving offence at home, where for the
 “most part we hear in ten days after, of any
 “thing that is communicated to the French
 “ministers.” Danby was so unwilling to
 have any concern in this scandalous treaty,
 that, in order to remove his scruples, and
 secure him from all danger, the king sub-
 joined with his own hand these words:
 “this letter is writ by my order, C. R.”

The commons were enraged at this in-
 telligence; and carrying their suspicions
 farther than the present discovery, they
 concluded, that the king had all along been
 a pensioner of France, and that in all his
 promises and preparations for war, he had
 only meant to amuse the allies. Eager to
 dive to the bottom of so important a secret,
 and being infligated by Danby's numerous
 enemies, they immediately presented be-
 fore the house of peers, an impeachment
 of high-treason against that minister.

The charge imported, that he had trai-
 terously usurped the regal power, by giving
 instructions to his majesty's ambassadors,
 without the knowledge of the secretaries of
 state, or the privy council: that he had trai-
 terously endeavoured to overturn the con-
 stitution, and establish an arbitrary govern-
 ment, by raising and maintaining an army,
 con-

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contrary to act of parliament: that he had traiterously endeavoured to alienate from his majesty the affections of his subjects, by negotiating a disadvantageous peace with France, and procuring money for that purpose: that he was Popishly affected, and had traiterously concealed, after he had notice, the late horrid and bloody conspiracy, formed by the Papists against his majesty's person and government: that he had wasted the king's treasure; and that he had, by indirect means, procured several exorbitant grants from the crown.

It is evident that this impeachment was rather levelled against the king himself, than against Danby, who had only acted by the express orders of his majesty. This was a circumstance, however, of which the commons affected to be ignorant; hoping they should be able, by the fear of punishment, to compel the treasurer to plead the king's orders, and by that means to lay open the whole of the scandalous transaction between Charles and Lewis. Danby was thrown into the utmost perplexity: he could not justify himself without accusing the king; and he could not accuse the king without entirely forfeiting his favour; the rather as Charles had earnestly besought him not to divulge his secrets, and offered him

him a pardon in order to screen him from the rage of the parliament.

He determined, therefore, to conceal his majesty's orders, and to defend himself in the best manner he could. He accused Montague as the person who had advised and conducted those pernicious treaties; and to prove this assertion, sent two of that minister's letters to the house of commons, who would not suffer them to be read. He declared in the house of peers, that the French ministry had always regarded him as a declared enemy to the interest of their nation: that he had employed the utmost diligence in tracing and discovering the Popish plot: that he had wasted no treasure, because there was no treasure to waste: and that it was in his power to vindicate his conduct in such a manner, as would clear him from every article of the impeachment.

The lords plainly saw, that, allowing all the charge of the commons to be true, Danby's crime fell not within the statute of Edward the third; and though the words treason and traiterously had been so carefully subjoined to several articles, this appellation could not alter the nature of things, nor prove him to be guilty of that crime. They, therefore, refused to commit him to the tower: the commons insisted on their de-

demand : a furious contest ensued : and the king, dreading some fatal consequence from the violence of the lower house, thought proper to prorogue the parliament; which he soon after dissolved.

Such was the conclusion of a parliament, which, one year excepted, had sat during the whole course of the present reign. The spirit, which it had lately discovered, was very different from that, which it breathed in the beginning. Being elected during the joy and festivity of the restoration, it was composed almost entirely of royalists, who were disposed to support the crown with all the liberality which the habits of the age would permit.

But many causes had since concurred to alienate their affections from his majesty. His open alliance with France, which was so inconsistent with the interest of the nation ; his secret connexions with that crown, which were equally pernicious and dishonourable ; his two several Dutch wars, undertaken with the sole view of destroying that republic, the chief support of civil liberty ; his dangerous designs, and even attempts, against the rights and privileges of his own subjects ; his attachment to the Catholic religion ; his aversion to the Protestants : these and many other circumstances had

had tended to withdraw their confidence from the king, and to make them oppose him in all his measures. This, indeed, is a fate which every king may naturally expect, who neglects to make the welfare of the nation the end of his actions, and the voice of the people the rule of his conduct.

The manner of Godfrey's death, which had hitherto remained an impenetrable secret, was at last discovered. Miles Prance, a goldsmith of London, who sometimes worked in the queen's chapel of Somerset-house, was taken up, by a warrant of the council, upon the information of one Wren, who lodged in his house, and who said he had been concerned in Godfrey's murder. Prance, having obtained a promise of pardon, resolved to turn evidence against the other assassins; and the persons he accused were Girald and Kelly, two Irish priests; Green and Hill, belonging to the queen's chapel; and Berry, porter of Somerset-house.

The deposition he made was to the following effect: that Girald, Kelly, Green, Berry, Hill, and the deponent, with the consent and approbation of some others, had, after several consultations, resolved to murder Sir Edmundbury Godfrey, as being a bitter persecutor of the Catholics, an ac-

tive discoverer of their plots, and a particular enemy to the queen's servants : that, in pursuance of this resolution, Hill went, on the twelfth of October in the morning, to Godfrey's house, and talked with him for some time in private : that from thence he repaired to a neighbouring house; where Girald and Green had taken their station, and where they waited till Godfrey came out, which he did about ten or eleven o'clock, all alone, as usual : that they dogged him to several places, till about six or seven in the evening ; when Green came to the deponent's house, and told him, " that " they had set him near St. Clement's ;" and desired that Prance would make all haste to the water-gate, at Somerset-house, where he would find Kelly and Berry, which he accordingly did : that they waited there till about nine o'clock, when Hill came suddenly running, and told them, " that " he was just coming ; they must therefore pretend a quarrel, and he would " bring him in ;" that while Kelly and Berry were in a seeming scuffle, Hill stopped Godfrey at the gate, and begged for God's sake he would come in ; " for there " were two men a quarrelling, and he was " afraid there would be bloodshed : " that Godfrey, being a magistrate, at last consent-

sented; Hill going before him to show him the persons, and Girald and Green following after: that the deponent watched the water gate, and Berry was to secure the passage by the chapel; but that first Berry and Kelly, the pretended combatants, stood about the end of the rail by the queen's stables; and as Godfrey was going down to them, Green threw a twisted Handkerchief round his neck, when all four fell upon him and strangled him: that they then threw him behind the rail, and gave him some violent blows on the breast with their knees; while Green with all his force almost wrung his neck round: that the deponent and Berry coming up to them, when he was quite dead, they all helped to carry his body into Dr. Godden's lodgings, where Hill lived: that they brought it into a little room, which was only five or six steps above the ground, and where it lay till the Monday night ensuing: that then Hill and some others removed it into a room in the upper court, where the deponent saw it by the light of a dark lanthorn; on Tuesday night, it was carried to another room in the long entry, opposite to Dr. Godden's lodgings; and on Wednesday night it was removed to the little room, where it was first laid: that after keeping the body above four days

and nights, Girald and Kelly advised them to carry it into the fields, and leave him run through with his own sword, that he might be supposed "to have murdered himself;" and in order to render their opinion the more probable, that his money, rings, &c. should be all left with him: that in the prosecution of this scheme, Hill procured a sedan, into which they put the body; and that Berry, the porter, having invited the centinels into his house, opened the gate, and the deponent and Girald carried out the sedan; that sometimes they, sometimes Kelly and Green carried it towards Soho fields, hard by the Grecians church; where Hill attended with a horse, upon which the body was set before him, and the sedan left in some unfinished buildings; Girald saying, "I wish we had a hundred such rogues as secure as this:" that the deponent, being a house-keeper, returned home; and the other four went on, one leading the horse, Hill riding and holding the body, and the other two walking by: that, in case they should be met and questioned by any one, they had resolved to say, that it was a drunken man whom they were carrying home: that they carried him to a place called Primrose-hill, about two miles from town, where they left him in a ditch, with
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his own sword run through him by Girald, in the exact posture of one that had murdered himself.

This deposition Prance afterwards retracted before the council; but he soon after retracted that retraction. The reason he assigned for denying his confession was, that he apprehended his pardon was not fully secure; but that he had no soon obtained that security, than he instantly returned to his evidence, which was strictly true in every particular. It has been alledged by some writers, that many unfair and even cruel methods were employed, in order to compel Prance to his first deposition, as well as to his second retraction; but as no proof is advanced for these allegations, the reader, we hope, will excuse us for passing them over in silence.

Prance's evidence was supported by the depositions of other witnesses. Oates deposed, that he heard Godfrey, a little before his death, say, "That he went in perpetual fear of his life from the Popish party, and had been dogged for several days." One Robinson swore, that he heard him say, "he believed he should be the first martyr." Bedloe deposed, that though he had no hand in the murder of Godfrey, he had an opportunity of seeing

the dead body after the crime was committed: that he had been led by Le Phaire, through a dark entry, into a room in Somerset house, where he saw several people, and among the rest Prance; and that upon viewing the face of the murdered person by the light of a dark-lanthorn, he knew it to be that of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey.

Bedloe, it seems, in a former deposition before the lords, had declared that Le Phaire, Walth, Pritchard, and Keins, had wheedled Godfrey into the court of Somerset house, under pretence of seizing some plotters: that after taking a turn or two, and pretending to send for a constable, they pushed him into a room, presented a pistol to his breast, and threatened to kill him, if he made any noise; but would do him no harm, if he would send for his examinations: and upon his refusing to comply with their demand, they stifled him between two pillows, and, in order to dispatch him the more effectually, strangled him with a long neckcloth.

As this account differed so widely from that delivered by Prance, great stress has been laid upon this circumstance, and it has been considered as an incontestible proof that both these witnesses were perjured. But
it

it is to be observed, that, as Bedloe was not present at the commission of the murder, his knowledge of it could only be derived from information; and it is very possible, that he might be misinformed. In every other particular, relating to the circumstances, which succeeded the murder, Bedloe's evidence, so far as it extended, was perfectly consistent with the deposition of Prance.

The defence of the prisoners, consisted chiefly in endeavouring to prove an *alibi*, as the lawyers call it; that is, that, during the time mentioned, they were in other places than that, where the murder was said to have been committed. This proof, it seems, appeared not satisfactory to the jury, who, after a short consultation, brought them all in guilty; and the chief justice, Scroggs, a man of candour and humanity, said, that they had found the same verdict, which he would have found, had he been one of them. Green, Hill, and Berry, were condemned to death, which they suffered accordingly; the two first in February, the last in May.

In the beginning of the year,* the king issued writs for convoking a new parliament; and

* A. D. 1679.

and while the nation was in its present discontented humour, no wonder, that the current should run strong against the court. This election is perhaps the first, which since the commencement of the English monarchy, had been carried on by a violent struggle between the parties, and where the ministry employed all their power and interest in influencing the choice of the national representatives. But all their endeavours were rendered ineffectual by the jealous spirit which prevailed in the kingdom. Religion, liberty, property, even the lives of men were supposed to be in danger; nothing, it was thought, but a vigilant parliament, could defeat the designs of the court and the Catholics. The elections, therefore, were every where carried in favour of the country-party. All the patriots of the last parliament were re-chosen: new ones were added: the Presbyterians particularly, who had great sway in the corporations, and who were inflamed with the most inveterate antipathy against Popery, exerted themselves with great diligence on the occasion; and by the accounts which arrived from all parts of England, it was concluded, that the new parliament would exceed the old in their opposition to the court,

court, and in their zeal against the Catholics.

The king forsook the approaching storm, and endeavoured, if possible, to dispel it. The first step, which he took for that purpose, was extremely well judged. This was desiring the duke of York to retire to the Continent, that no farther suspicion might remain of the influence of Popish councils. The duke yielded a ready obedience; but first demanded an order for that purpose, signed by the king; lest his absence should be considered as a presumption of fear or guilt. He likewise required, that his brother should satisfy him, as well as the nation, by a public declaration of the illegitimacy of the duke of Monmouth, a natural son of his majesty by Lucy Walters, and born about ten years before the Restoration. Being gratified in this request, he withdrew with his family to Brussels, where he took up his residence.

But the king soon found, that this precaution was not sufficient to allay the spirit of discontent, which his former measures had excited. The uncomplying temper of the parliament appeared in the very beginning of the session. The commons had ever been wont to consult the inclinations of the sovereign, in the choice of their speaker; and

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and even the long parliament in 1641, had not refused to pay this mark of deference. The king now desired, that Sir Thomas Meres should be honoured with that office : but Seymour, speaker of the last parliament, was immediately re-elected by an unanimous vote of the house.

The king refused to approve the election, and ordered the commons to proceed to a new choice. A violent contest ensued. The commons asserted that the king's approbation was merely a form, and that he could not, without giving a reason, reject the speaker chosen: the king maintained, that, since he had the power of rejecting, he was not obliged to assign any reason. After a warm altercation, the dispute was compromised by setting aside both candidates, and electing Gregory, a lawyer, who was readily approved by the king. It has ever since been taken for granted, that the choice of the speaker belongs solely to the house ; which, though seemingly a matter of no great importance, may yet be considered as an acquisition made by this parliament.

Seymour was believed to be an enemy to Danby, and it was owing to the persuasion of this nobleman, as generally supposed, that the king had engaged in this imprudent

dent controversy with the commons. The impeachment, therefore, of Danby was for that reason the sooner resumed ; and it was alledged by the commons, that, notwithstanding the intervening dissolution, they might lawfully proceed in that matter, as if every thing done by the last parliament had been performed by the present : a pretension, which, though unusual, seems tacitly to have been yielded them.

The king, afraid that Danby, if pushed to extremity, would betray his secrets, had taken care to grant him a pardon beforehand ; and in order to protect the chancellor against all attacks of the commons, he had, with his own hand, affixed the seal to the parchment. He told the parliament, that as Danby had done nothing without his orders, he was entirely innocent ; that, in any event, he was resolved to insist upon his pardon ; and if it should appear any way defective in form, he would renew it again and again, till it should be rendered entirely compleat : but that he was determined to strip him of all his employments, and remove him from his presence and councils.

The commons were far from being satisfied with this declaration. They maintained, that no pardon of the crown could be
pleaded

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pleaded in bar of an impeachment by the commons. The sovereign had hitherto been supposed to be possessed of an unlimited power of shewing mercy ; and this pretension of the commons, it must be owned, was altogether new. It was, however, very necessary in a limited monarchy ; where the servants of the crown ought for ever to be accountable to national assemblies, even for such abuses of power as they may commit in obedience to their master's orders.

The present juncture, while the current ran so strong against the court, was the proper time for extorting such a privilege ; and the commons failed not to seize and improve the advantage : they still insisted on the commitment of Danby. The lords, finding it in vain to resist, were obliged to yeild to the torrent, and ordered Danby to be sent to the tower. Danby disappeared. The commons brought in a bill obliging him to surrender himself before a certain day, on pain of being subjected to an act of attainder. This bill was sent up to the peers, who returned it with some amendments : a dispute arose, and conferences were held on the subject : at length, the peers acquiesced, and the bill of attainder was carried. Rather than be condemned unheard, Danby surrendered himself to the
usher

usher of the black-rod, and was committed prisoner to the tower.

On the twenty-first day of March, Tongue, Oates, Bedloe, and one Everard, a new witness, were summoned to the bar of the house of commons to be examined concerning the plot. The commons having heard the deposition of Bedloe, presented an address to his majesty, entreating him to grant to that witness the reward of five hundred pounds, which he had promised, by proclamation, to the person who should first discover the murderers of Godfrey; and to command him to the protection of the duke of Monmouth, general of the forces.

They likewise voted, in imitation of the last parliament, that they were fully satisfied, that there has been for several years, and still is, a horrible and treasonable conspiracy, contrived and carried on by Papists, for murdering his majesty's sacred person, destroying the Protestant religion, and subverting the established government: the peers concurred with them in this vote; and both houses petitioned for a day of fast and humiliation.

The king, alarmed at the violence of the parliament, began to bethink himself of a remedy. Sir William Temple had been lately recalled from his foreign employments;

and as, after the removal of Danby, the king had no one in whom he could repose so much confidence, he was determined, upon Coventry's demission, to appoint him one of his secretaries of state. But that philosophical patriot, alike averse to the intrigues of a court, and the noise and turbulence of popular assemblies, modestly declined the honour intended him.

Mean while, he could not refuse to assist his majesty in the present emergence, and he recommended a plan which seemed to bid fair for composing the public disturbances. He told the king, that as the jealousies of the nation were strong, it was necessary to remove them by some new remedy, and to restore that confidence so requisite for the safety both of king and people: that to thwart the parliament in their present measures, would probably be productive of the most fatal consequences: that if the king would admit into his council such men as enjoyed the confidence of the people, no unreasonable demands would be made; or, if made, his majesty, under the sanction of such counsellors, might be enabled, with greater safety, to refuse them: and that the leaders of the popular party, being honoured with the king's favour, would probably become more moderate in their principles, and

and would endeavour to restore that public tranquillity, which some of them had been at so much pains to destroy.

The king was convinced of the solidity of these reasons ; and, in concert with Temple, he formed a new privy-council, by whose advice he declared he was resolved for the future to regulate all his measures. Fifteen of the chief officers of the crown were continued, who, it was believed, in case of any extremity, would still adhere to the king, and support the royal prerogative. The other part of the council was composed, either of men of abilities, unconnected with the court, or of those who enjoyed the chief influence in both houses,

The names of the counsellors were prince Rupert, the archbishop of Canterbury, lord Finch chancellor, the earl of Shaftsbury president, the earl of Anglesea privy-seal, the dukes of Albemarle, Monmouth, Newcastle, Lauderdale, Ormond, the marquisses of Winchester and Worcester, the earls of Arlington, Salisbury, Bridgewater, Sunderland, Essex, Bath, the viscounts of Falconbridge and Hallifax, the bishop of London, the lords Robarts, Hollis, Russel and Cavendish, secretary Coventry, Sir Francis North chief-justice, Sir Henry Capel, Sir

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John Erneley, Sir Thomas Chicheley, Sir William Temple, Edward Seymour, and Henry Powle.

The king imagined, that, by this expedient, he should be able to appease the clamours of the people. London indeed, and most parts of the kingdom, resounded with acclamations at this change of councils, which seemed to prognosticate a change of measures: but the commons, who were better acquainted with the designs of the court, received the news of it with great indifference. So little were they satisfied with this alteration, that they proceeded to vote unanimously, that the duke of York's being a Roman Catholic, and the presumptive heir of the crown, was the chief encouragement to the designs and plots of the Papists against the king and the Protestant religion. It was even supposed, that a bill would be soon introduced for excluding him from the throne.

In order to prevent this measure, the king concerted some limitations, which he imparted to the parliament. In the preamble to this plan he addressed them in the following terms: " And to show you, that, " while you are doing your parts, my " thoughts have not been misemployed, " but that it is my constant care to do eve-
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“ry thing, that may preserve your religion, and secure it for the future in all events, I have commanded my lord chancellor to mention several particulars ; which, I hope, will be an evidence, that, in all things, which concern the public security, I shall not follow your zeal, but lead it.”

The limitations proposed, imported, that, upon the succession of a Popish prince, the parliament sitting at the death of the late king, should continue ; or, in case there should be no parliament at that juncture, the last should assemble without any new writs of election ; nor should it be in the power of the prince, for a certain time, to dissolve this parliament : that, during the whole course of his reign, he should not be allowed to confer ecclesiastical benefices or spiritual offices upon any but pious and learned Protestants : that no members of the privy-council, or judges, should be appointed or displaced, but by the authority of parliament : that all justices of the peace should be Protestants : and that, with regard to the militia, no lieutenant of a county should be deprived of his office, but by order of parliament. The chancellor, of himself, added, “ it is hard to invent another
“ restraint ; considering how much the re-
“ venue

“ venue will depend upon the consent of
 “ parliament : but yet, if any thing else
 “ can occur to the wisdom of the parlia-
 “ ment, which may farther secure religion
 “ and liberty against a Popish successor,
 “ without defeating the right of succession
 “ itself, his majesty will most readily con-
 “ sent to it.”

These limitations, however considerable, were not sufficient to satisfy the commons : they still thought that no restraints could possibly tie the hands of a prince, so obstinate in his temper, so arbitrary in his principles, and so bigotted to his religion. A total exclusion from the throne, they imagined, could alone secure the liberties of the nation ; and however sacred the right of succession, yet, in cases of extreme necessity, it ought to be sacrificed to the good of the public, which is allowed to be the end of all government.

A bill of exclusion was accordingly introduced, and strongly supported by a numerous party. The preamble to the bill represented, that the pope’s emissaries had seduced James duke of York, the presumptive heir of the crown : that they had converted him to the Catholic religion, and engaged him in several negotiations with the pope, cardinals, and nuncios, for the
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interest of that communion : that, by his means, they had increased the greatness of the French king, to the manifest danger of England : and that, by the accession of a Popish prince to the throne, supported by foreign alliances, they would in time be enabled to accomplish their wicked purpose of destroying the liberty and religion of the kingdom.

The bill then ordained, that James duke of York, Albany, and Ulster, should be incapable of inheriting the crowns of England, Scotland and Ireland: that, upon the death or resignation of the king, the sovereignty of these kingdoms should devolve to the person next in succession after the duke : that all acts of royalty, which that prince should afterwards perform, should not only be void, but held treasonable: that if he entered any of these dominions, he should be deemed guilty of the same offence ; and that all who supported his title should be punished as rebels and traitors. This important bill passed the lower house by a majority of seventy-nine voices.

End of the TWENTY-SIXTH VOLUME.



